The Christology of G.W.H. Lampe in its contemporary setting

Watson, Leslie

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF G.W.H. LAMPE IN ITS CONTEMPORARY SETTING

Leslie Watson

The development of Professor Lampe's thesis is traced from his original liberal Evangelical stance in the 1940s, to the point of open rupture with orthodoxy over the resurrection in 1966. Throughout nearly twenty years, points of growing disagreement with traditional doctrines had appeared in his writings, though it is to be particularly observed that during that period no departure from the doctrine of the Incarnation was involved. In an essay of 1972, 'The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ', however, he ended by asking "must Spirit-Christology give way to the concept of the incarnation of the pre-existent divine being, the Logos/Son?" 1977 saw the publication of God as Spirit, and, with it, his final answer to that question. He subjected the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity to radical criticism, their patristic background being especially exposed to his massive learning in that area. Past theologies he regarded as relative to their age, and he used Christian experience of encounter with God as a significant criterion for evaluating the adequacy of contemporary doctrine. Like C.E. Raven, he emphasised the continuity of God's creative work in cosmology and soteriology, avoiding the idea that, in Christ, God had broken into his creative process and altered his relationship to his creation. We find the key to the meaning of that process in Jesus. For Lampe, he is the climax, the focal point, the determinant, the model and archetype of the divine-human encounter, the 'Adam' in whom the goal of the process of man's creation is already disclosed.

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF G.W.H. LAMPE, IN ITS CONTEMPORARY SETTING.

by

LESLIE WATSON

Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts

in the University of Durham,

Department of Theology.

1985.

CONTENTS

Professor S.W. Sykes, on behalf of the author Canon Leslie Watson, hereby declares that no material in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

22, Seaton Crescent,
Whitley Bay
Tyne and Wear,
NE25 8DG.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express gratitude, on my late husband's behalf, for the help and encouragement given by his supervisor, Canon S.W. Sykes, Van Mildert Professor of Divinity at the University of Durham. My husband considered it a privilege to work under his guidance.

Warm thanks are also due to Mrs. D. Kendra and Mrs. J. Moore who made themselves readily available to assist with typing the manuscript. Lastly, I wish to record my gratitude to Miss N. Coulson who helped in proof-reading the thesis.

Connie Watson

CHAPTER ONE

G.W.H. Lampe The Starting Point for his Christology 1938 - 48

Introduction

This thesis is concerned with a central aspect of the theological thought of Geoffrey Lampe, one of the leading English theologians of the mid-twentieth century. At his death in 1980 a number of puzzles and unanswered questions remained about the nature of his intellectual pilgrimage. Sadly, he left no extended autobiographical reflections which might have illuminated these, and a writer on him is forced to make a number of guesses about the reasons for the more striking changes.

In relation to Lampe's Christology the change over the years was, broadly speaking, a movement from a form of evangelical orthodoxy, to a radicalism with affinities to much that had characterized liberal Protestantism in earlier decades. This thesis will trace this development, but does not presume to offer any single key to explain why it took place. The evidence will be allowed to speak for itself, though it becomes obvious that the mature Christology of his later years is the fruit of a method in the handling of theological questions with deep roots in his earlier works.

In the present chapter we shall present by way of introduction two brief studies of elements in the theological situation of Lampe's early years as a theologian. These are the conclusions reached by the Archbishop's Commission on Doctrine in the Church of England, which reported in 1938,

the year of Lampe's priesting, and the conclusions of the report, The Fulness of Christ, convened at the behest of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1948 to present a statement of where Evangelical Anglican theological thought stood. These two reports are important for our topic, in as much as we have the benefit of Lampe's remarks on a reissue of the former document, and his signature to the latter as a full participant in its preparation. These documents, in other words, serve to set the scene for the opening of Lampe's theological career.

But, first, some very brief biographical details will be given.[1] It was in October, 1931, that he went up to Exeter College, Oxford, as senior scholar of the year. The Rector of the College was Dr. R.R. Marett, a distinguished anthropologist. Lampe's first five terms were devoted to Honour Classical Moderations under the tuition of Eric Barber, an authority on Propertius. Cyril Bailey lectured on Cicero and Lucretius, Professor Gilbert Murray on Homer. In the second year Barber put Lampe in for the Hertford Scholarship, an advanced university prize examination of four or five sessions devoted to Latin composition and extremely difficult unseen translation.

After Honour Moderations Lampe proceeded to Greats, which fell into two main parts, philosophy and ancient history. His tutors in those subjects respectively were William Kneale and Dacre Balsdon. The lectures on moral philosophy were given by Lord Franks, as he later became. Then there were Father D'Arcy, on Aristotle, and E.F. Carritt, on moral philosophy again. M.V. Osmond, a close friend of Lampe at Exeter, wrote of Lampe's early days at Oxford:

> In modern philosophy I think Geoffrey and I may have treated our studies somewhat light-heartedly, as is perhaps suggested by our joint invention of a new doctrine called Transcendental Negativism, whose basic tenet was 'no universal proposition, even the universal proposition that no universal proposition is valid, is valid'. 2

After taking a first in Greats Lampe decided to remain at Oxford for a fifth year and to read the Honour School of Theology with a view to ordination. In 1932 he listened to Canon Streeter's Bampton Lectures on "The Buddha and the Christ". When in the course of his Greats' studies he discussed problems of morals or metaphysics, the religious factor was something which he tended to discount or to relegate, as it were, to a footnote. Osmond wrote that during those years he was never conscious of any deep religious conviction on Lampe's part, nor any inkling of his later emergence as an eminent theologian. He had to cover in a year what were normally seven-term courses. After taking a first in Theology, he moved to Queen's College, Birmingham, a broad-based theological college, which, as a liberal Evangelical, he felt would be more congenial than one of the more sectarian institutions. In 1937 he was ordained deacon, and after a short curacy at Okehampton (1937-8), he became an assistant master at King's School, Canterbury.

The 1938 Doctrine Report[3]

In 1922 a Commission was appointed by the Archbishop to report on the state of doctrine in the Church of England, specifically in order to meet the furore which had arisen over the Modern Churchmen's Union Conference at Girton College, Cambridge, in 1921. The theme of the Conference was Christ and the Creeds. Of the Christological papers, the most

notable were H. Rashdall's "Christ as Logos and Son of God", J.F. Bethune-Baker's "Jesus as both human and divine", and H.D.A. Major's "Jesus the Son of God". The significance of these for our topic is shown by the fact that subsequently Lampe claimed that most of the issues raised by the Myth of God Incarnate (1977), by his own Bampton lectures for 1976, and by a number of writings of the 1970 s, were anticipated by "these short seminal essays".[4]

Rashdall tried to say what liberal theologians meant when they used traditional language about the divinity of Christ. Jesus, he pointed out, did not claim divinity for Himself. He was a man, as much so as any other, having a human body, soul, intellect and will. He asserted that it was unorthodox to suppose that the human soul of Jesus pre-existed, or that His divinity necessarily implied the virgin birth or any other miracle. Even historical proof of the latter would be no demonstration of divinity, nor would disproof throw doubt upon it. The divinity did not imply omniscience. Jesus entertained eschatological expectations which history has not verified, and He acknowledged His ignorance of the date of the parousia. Divine and human were not to be regarded as mutually exclusive terms, for there was a certain affinity or community of nature between God and man. It was impossible to believe that God was fully incarnate in Christ but possible to believe that, in Jesus, God had revealed himself supremely, uniquely. (Lampe was repeatedly to use the word "decisive" in this connection.) Rashdall could think of God as so like Christ, that Christ's character and teaching contained the fullest disclosure of God's

character, and of His will for men. That, for Rashdall, was the true meaning of Christ's divinity. The ancient doctrine of the Logos, expressed that truth in terms of a bygone philosophy, and he reminded his readers that in the teaching of the Schoolmen and Augustine, the Logos was not a centre of consciousness but an activity of the one and only divine mind. This brief summary of Rashdall's paper strikes the main notes of the other two mentioned.

All this was a damaging and disruptive episode. The substance of a gravamen presented by the English Church Union was as follows: erroneous opinions had been advanced concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, the Catholic creed had been seriously criticised, these opinions had been widely published, the minds of the faithful distressed, the enemies of the faith encouraged, and the honesty of the clergy called in question. The Upper House of Convocation was called on to declare such opinions contrary to biblical and Church teaching. At the centre of the protest was the concern that the doctrine of the Incarnation had been repudiated, that the idea of divine character had been infused into a human person and that this was being substituted for the doctrine of the Word made flesh. Such teaching, the petition concluded, was subversive of the Christian faith, and therefore called for authoritative condemnation.

An "unexcited" reply from the Archbishop of Canterbury (Davidson) provoked Bishop Gore's reply, that if the bishops administered no rebuke, and did not reaffirm the basis on which the Church of England stood, it would be assenting to formidable heresy.[5]

It is relevant to record that the Bishop of Gloucester (Gibson) said that one of the Conference speakers claimed the authority of St. Paul for identifying Christ and the Holy Spirit, relying on a single passage of doubtful interpretation, and ignoring the passages in which St. Paul mentioned together the Eternal Son and the Holy Spirit. Another speaker seemed to deny the pre-existence of Christ, and His claim to eternal Godhead. Gibson contended, however, that Synodical condemnation was not the proper method of procedure. Argument must be met by argument. He proposed that the House of Bishops should declare that the teaching in the Nicene creed, especially concerning the eternal pre-existence and true Godhead of the Son, and His incarnation, was essential to the Church's life.

The question of clerical integrity also arose. The Church commissioned as its ministers those only who expressed adhesion to the ancient faith. Nevertheless the bishops did recognise the gain which arose from enquiry into meaning and expression, and welcomed every aid which thoughtful reverent students found in the results of sound literary and historical criticism and of modern scientific and historical investigation of the problems of human psychology: the House deprecated the mere blunt denunciation of contributions made by those endeavouring to illuminate new and anxious problems. The publication of debatable suggestions as if they were ascertained truths was dangerous. Caution was necessary especially on the part of responsible teachers. Lampe subsequently commented that "the controversy fizzled out into verbiage", the Commissioners' work was investigative only, not formative.[7]

Moving now to the Report itself, the Archbishop's letter of 1922 to the Bishop of Oxford laid down the Commission's task: to consider the nature and grounds of Christian doctrine, with a view to investigating how far it is possible to remove or diminish existing differences within the Church of England.

In the introductory considerations in the section on Christology it is declared that Christ is both God and man. This does not imply actions in two alternating capacities.[8] In Him God was made man with a human body and a reasonable soul. The whole of the Son's life was mediated throughout by genuinely human faculties. He advanced in wisdom and stature, and was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. God was and is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. In the effort to expound the truth of the Incarnation there had been two main tendencies, one (Antiochene) concerned to justify the true humanity, and the other (Alexandrian) the true divinity. One-sided developments, respectively, led to heresies, Nestorianism and monophysitism. The Church affirmed both the divinity and the humanity, each complete, really united.

The Report recalled the rise of Kenotic theories, concerned to meet the difficulty of combining the human limitations in Jesus with His deity. It was, however, neither desirable nor possible to give an exhaustive account of the Incarnation. The unity between God and Jesus was best expressed in Scripture: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father", and "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven".

That Jesus was perfect did not conflict with the scriptural record that He increased in wisdom and stature, and was made

perfect in suffering. It was to be understood as meaning that at each stage in His development he had the perfection appropriate to that stage. One form of the belief in His perfection was the assertion of His sinlessness. This did not rest essentially on any of His recorded sayings and deeds. It referred to the impact of His person on the first disciples. The word belongs to the terminology of religion rather than of ethics. There was no trace of penitence in His consciousness. The Commission was convinced that the gospels reflect a flawless character, and that the conception was vitally related to the experience of redemption.

The idea of Christ's pre-existence was easily misunderstood. We give to Jesus the worship that is due to God alone. This is justifiable only if He is one with God, in a sense not attributable to others. He is not a purely historical figure; He is the manifestation in history of the Word who was "in the beginning with God, and was God". We are told that to assert the pre-existence of the soul of Jesus is inconsistent with orthodoxy, but we must not press the analogy of human consciousness too far. More important than the solution of psychological problems is the holding fast the belief that Christ was in the full sense God.

This union of divinity and humanity in Jesus inaugurated a new era for mankind, of fellowship with God. There is a new spiritual manhood in Christ Jesus which we are able to share; this gives to Christianity its character of finality and triumph, although the created universe awaits the fulfilment of the divine purpose to "sum up all things in Christ".

There follow the Commissioners' words about Christ the

Mediator. Our redemption is only through Him, the one necessary mediator. His access to the Father was direct, we have access only through Him. The true relationship is expressed thus: "I in them and Thou in Me".

Briefly, at this point, the work of the Holy Spirit is mentioned; the fuller treatment of the doctrine comes later. It is through the Incarnation that there comes to men that fulness of divine power which is spoken of as the gift of the Holy Spirit, as, conversely, it is through the Holy Spirit that we are made partakers of Christ's life.

There is an important paragraph concerning theological propositions and their limitations. The fulness of the divine life revealed in Christ cannot be adequately expressed in human language. It must be recognised that changes in forms of thought and the progress of knowledge may necessitate changes in the intellectual formulation of the content of revelation, though this does not mean that there is any change in that which has been revealed. Theological propositions, formulations, are not to be regarded as being in principle irreformable. If some are found neither to need nor to be capable of revision, they may be regarded as "final", but only "in the sense that examination invariably leads to their re-affirmation." [9]

The Report also contains a note on the relation of modern Christology to the Chalcedonian formula. The real and absolute deity and humanity in the one Christ is affirmed. He is made known in two natures, without confusion, without conversion, without division, without separation. The letters of Cyril were approved, stressing that the subject of the experiences of the incarnate life was the one divine person. So also was

the Tome of Leo, which stressed the distinction of the natures. No limitation was attributed to Christ beyond that concerning the date of the Parousia which He Himself had mentioned. Modern theology, by a return to the Scriptures, with their evidence of surprise and disappointment in Christ had broken fresh ground. The Commission believed they were affirming what Chalcedon had expressed in language of its own time, but they asserted that the Church is in no way bound to the metaphysic or psychology underlying the Conciliar terminology.

There follow paragraphs on (a) the Virgin birth (b) the Resurrection (c) the Ascension, and heavenly priesthood, and later there are sections on the Atonement, the doctrines of the Holy Spirit, and of the Trinity.

Belief in the Virgin Birth as an historical event cannot be independent of the historical evidence, which, by itself, cannot be other than inconclusive. There are four main grounds on which the doctrine is valued: (i) it is a safeguard of the conviction that in the birth of Jesus we have, not simply the birth of a new individual of the human species but the advent of one who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven; (ii) it is congruous with the belief that in the person of Christ humanity made a fresh beginning: (iii) it coheres with the supernatural element in the life of Christ, indicating a unique inauguration of that unique life; (iv) it gives expression to the idea of the response of the human race to God's purpose through the faith and obedience of Mary.

Some of the Commission disagreed, holding that the notion tended to mar the belief that in the Incarnation God revealed himself at every point in and through human nature. It was

recognised that the work of scholars on the New Testament had created a new setting of which theologians were obliged to take account. Both views were held by members who fully accepted the reality of the Incarnation.

The primary evidence for the Resurrection was the existence of the Church. Direct evidence was said to be found in the Pauline epistles, the Synoptic gospels, the Acts, and the fourth gospel. The record of the Passion itself was evidence; it could never have been included except by those who believed in the risen Lord, and the belief is compatible with the realisation that we cannot expect full knowledge in detail, and also with a variety of critical views. The faith is generally compatible with such views as would not have the effect, if accepted, of invalidating the apostolic testimony. Jesus' rising is to be understood as an event as real and concrete as the crucifixion, and as an act of God, unique in history. Some believed the story of the empty tomb to be a symbol of this fact, others held the traditional explanation. The Commissioners affirmed that the Resurrection was (a) the Father's vindication of the Person and work of Jesus, the pledge of His final victory over sin and death; (b) the Christian answer to the problem of suffering; (c) the confirmation of our hope of immortality; (d) the expression of the belief that the sovereignty of God was vindicated in the material creation and not outside or apart from it. Christ's resurrection coheres with the doctrine of creation. The Creator's handiwork will be brought to its goal in a redemption extending to the whole creation.

There is an important appended note (pp. 86-7) concerning

some considerations which must be taken into account in assessing the historical evidence for the Resurrection. The belief that the dead will rise again with their bodies at the last day had established itself in Judaism for some two centuries before the crucifixion. It may have played some part in shaping the tradition of Jesus' resurrection. This inclined some to the belief that the connection between the empty tomb and the appearances belonged rather to the sphere of religious symbolism than to historical fact. On the other hand to others it seemed essential to the full Christian hope that death should be reversed by resurrection.

The doctrine of a personal but purely spiritual immortality, sometimes substituted for the traditional eschatology, seemed to involve a false dualism between spirit and matter. Both groups agreed, however, that for all Christians belief in the resurrection at the last day enshrines a belief with regard to the process of history. The history of the race cannot be rightly interpreted merely as a process; there is a goal and a meaning. Christ anticipates the goal. His victory over death makes him mediator and revealer in time of an eternal destiny for the race.

Such considerations are unavoidable, for the resurrection of Christ is the central fact of history. Opinions are bound to differ as to how much in the record is derived from the actual occurrence, how much is due to primitive interpretation expressed inevitably in forms belonging to contemporary modes of thought and speech. No visual experience is devoid of the element of subjective interpretation, and so there will always be room for difference of judgement "(a) as to how much was seen with the bodily eye, and how much with spiritual vision; (b) how much

was objectively given, and how much was the contribution of subjective interpretation; (c) how much of what is admitted to be subjective interpretation may nevertheless be considered true."[10]

The self-conscious moderation of this Report inevitably left certain matters ambiguous. But it gives an accurate picture of the limits of acceptable opinion with the Church of England of Lampe's early days as a theologian. Not all would have agreed with all the freedoms claimed by members of the Commission. But the very publication of the Report gave some encouragement to those whose beliefs took account of recent historical scholarship.

In 1950 a group of Anglican Evangelicals produced the Report, The Fulness of Christ.[11] Lampe was a member, signed the Report, so we may assume that he agreed with it. We can extract two remarks from the Preface relevant to our theme. (1) in every age the Church, which is Christ's Body, has only imperfectly apprehended and expressed His mind, yet by His Spirit she has been promised a growing apprehension of the revelation of God in im. The Apostolic testimony in Holy Scripture is the abiding record of it. We cannot draw a line across history, and seek to return to the age of unbroken unity of the Church. Such unity does not guarantee loyalty to the Gospel. It is the whole history of the Church including that of its disrupted life which has reflected the glory of her Lord (p.viii). (2) The faithfulness of the ascended Lord still gives His gifts for the edifying of His Body "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God ... unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (p.ix).

To these extracts from the Preface we add the following observation. Within the short space of fifteen pages there are no fewer than thirty references to the work of the Holy Spirit when the subject being dealt with was soteriology. It is difficult to resist the feeling that here already in Lampe's mind were the seeds of his later Spirit Christology; especially is this so when we note the implications of the interchangeability of functions as between Christ and the Spirit.

Of this feature we can note briefly from the main body of the Report the following examples:

(1) Soteriology: We now have the friendship of the Redeemer and the power of the Spirit (p.19). The resurrection life of Christ is made available by the Spirit (p.19). The Gospel presents the full and sufficient sacrifice of Christ: this objective assurance is sealed by the inward witness of the Spirit (p.21).

(2) Sacraments: Men are enabled by them to respond to God, to be united to Him and to each other in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit (p.33). The Report couples Word and Sacrament, so that the Holy Spirit is said to indwell the Church and guide it, and the authentic record of His self-revelation is illuminated to the Church by the power of the Spirit (p.33). The differentiation of human functions in the Church is derived from Christ who, by His Spirit, appoints to men different gifts and callings (p.66).

(3) Scripture: The Church was promised the guidance of the Spirit for its understanding. The Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them to men (p.25). Biblical theology re-asserts a doctrine of the Bible which sees in it the inspiration of the Spirit (p.61).

In the main body of the Report, Lampe's early Evangelical stance in Christology is expressed in the sentence "the Reformation began effectively when Luther rediscovered the Pauline teaching on justification by faith (p.17).... It radically affected their (i.e. the Reformation Churches') whole concept of salvation" (p.17). "Total depravity" meant that even men's best acts and characteristics were tainted with sin. Salvation is a free gift. Through the sacrificial death of His Son, God has condemned sin and reconciled man to Himself. The cross is the full and sufficient answer of God to sin (p.18). The primary meaning of grace is God's spontaneous out-going love, doing in Christ all that needs to be done, and, on the basis of Christ's merits, welcoming sinners (p.19). Salvation is thus to be thought of fundamentally in terms of the response to God in Christ (p.24).

The Report goes on: The Church on earth cannot be identified simpliciter with the Kingdom of God, the identification which St. Augustine described as "madness" (De Sancta Virginitate 24). Christ is no more to be identified with the bread and wine in Holy Communion than is the Holy Spirit with the water in baptism. Only as united to Christ in His death and resurrection through receiving the body and blood of Christ is the Church able to offer herself acceptably to the Father (p.32). "Christ is transcendent over His Church, in correction, judgement and reform". We notice that later the Report uses the same terminology of the Bible, viz., "It stands over the Church as its judge and as its standard by which it is continually to reform itself" (p.33).

Christians have direct access to God in virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, a sacrifice which was done once for all, fully, perfectly, sufficiently, for the sins of the whole world; thus Christ is the great High Priest (p.35). He may be transcendent over His Church, but He is also immanent in it; it is is mystical body.

The above brief summary of the Report is sufficient to indicate the Evangelical ground of Lampe's early Christology. The following further remarks about the authority of the Bible, however, are also important; the Bible is the final and authoritative record of God's saving activity. The Church is indwelt by the Spirit, and so grows in its understanding of the revelation recorded in Scripture. The early Church's formulation of the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation represent that growth in understanding. Having said that, the Report added that neither for Church nor Bible can we claim infallibility (p.62). God takes men as they are and uses their personality and environment as a means of bringing His Spirit to bear upon them. Even venerable and long-standing tradition may turn out to be hoary error; "consuetudo sine veritate vetustas erroris est" (Cyprian ep. 74, 9). We must never forget that the appeal to antiquity is compromised by the appeal to history. Modern scholarship concludes that the Church's history is a stream of development, and that at no point is it possible to draw a line across it and say that what comes before that line is pure, and what comes after is corrupt. The weight of historic precedent is authoritative, but it is not conclusive; the final criterion is the Word of God.[12]

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. For what follows, see C.F.D. Moule (ed). C.W.H. Lampe, Christian, Scholar, Churchman, A Memoir by Friends. (Mowbray, 1982) esp. Ch.2 by M.V. Osmond.

2. ibid, p.13

3. Doctrine in the Church of England (S.P.C.K.,1938). The Report was reprinted in 1982, with an introduction by Geoffrey Lampe.

4. Introduction to Doctrine in the Church of England. (S.P.C.K., 1982), p.xxii.

5. ibid, p.xxv. Bishop Gore's letter described the Archbishop's speech in Convocation as "a grievous affliction". The story is narrated in detail by G.K.A. Bell, Randall Davidson (3rd. edn., O.U.P., 1925) pp.1136-50.

6. 2 Cor.3:17.

7. Lampe, Introduction, pp.xxvii - xxviii.

8. For what follows, see Doctrine in the Church of England, pp.72-90.

9. ibid, p.80.

10. ibid, p.88

11. S.P.C.K., 1950. In 1947 Archbishop Fisher invited D.E.W. Harrison, Archdeacon of Sheffield, to collect a group of Anglican Evangelicals to produce a document parallel to that already produced by a group of Anglo-Catholics (Catholicity). This group was first convened in June 1948, and met four times in 1949. At the same time The Catholicity of Protestantism was produced by a group of Free Church theologians. It corrected the misunderstandings of the Reformer's teaching, especially about the Justification, which had been shown by the authors of Catholicity.

12. The Fulness of Christ, p.63, citing C.H. Smythe, The Genius of the Church of England (S.P.C.K., 1947), p.32.

CHAPTER TWO

Lampe's early Christology

Introduction

As we move from 1948 to 1965 we do so from a position of relatively Evangelical orthodoxy through a period of liberal "anticipations" of later unorthodoxy to one of patent "discontinuity". Various points of traditional doctrine are openly criticised, and some rejected. It was a theological journey almost wholly determined by the impact of biblical and historical criticism. The view of Professor C.F.D. Moule concerning the shift in Lampe's position (quoted with his kind permission from a letter to the present author) is that ".... consistently from the beginning Geoffrey never did acquiesce with a great deal of the Patristic thought of which he was a most able exponent, but was searching for a rational account, in terms acceptable to the modern mind of such understandings of God as were reflected in New Testament and Patristic writings. On that showing I doubt if the Bamptons were more than a mature and long thought out statement of a position which, in principle, he had occupied all along....".

With this I find myself in full agreement. During this period he must have been continually rubbing up against points of view with which he felt progressively uneasy. His publications during the period show a developing sympathy, not so much with the old modernism of the 1921 Girton Conference, (whose leaders, Rashdall, Bethune, Baker and H.D.A. Major, he nevertheless referred to as "those seminal minds") as with a new more restrained and liberal development in ths understanding of the Christian faith.

The terminus of the investigation at this stage is 1965. The reason for this date is that Lampe made his first really major public pronouncement on what we might call doctrinal disagreement[1] when he rejected the story of the empty tomb and referred to it, frankly, as religious myth. This was the burning of his boats so far as his public "doctrinal" image was concerned. This chapter will seek to show the thought that led up to this particular climax, and the direction to which he was now obviously committed.

In studying Lampe's early Christology, we proceed to a careful historical exposition for the most part, with particular interest, not only in Christology, but also in pneumatology, and questions of authority for doctrine. After examining three short patristic studies, we shall present the fruits of his christological research at this stage in relation to certain Biblical matters, then to his work on the Sacraments and on the Spirit, before concluding with the observation of certain common themes and emphases.

Three short patristic studies.

In his article "Some Notes on the Significance of ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ in the Greek Fathers"[2] he marks their stress on the fact that the rule of God is defined in terms of immortality, seen as eternal life. The phrase "eternal life" meant character, and that was a central consideration for Lampe in his later thought about the spirit of Jesus, the spirit in Jesus, the spirit in a man. The Kingdom of God is based on the regeneration of the individual by the gift of the Holy Spirit (Cyril). Origen stressed the Kingdom as esentially within.

For all practical purposes there is no difference between God's Kingdom and the Kingdom of Christ. As the eternal pre-existent Word, Christ shares with the Father the absolute sovereignty of God. As the Incarnate one He possesses a derivative Kingship over mankind. Eusebius stresses that His Kingdom is the necessary attribute of His divinity, the "economic" Kingdom being assumed by virtue of the Incarnation. It is associated with the parousia and judgement (2 Clem). In Barnabas there is the theory of an earthly Chiliastic Kingdom: the "woes" will take place in the days of Christ's reign. Barnabas and Justin both speak of Christ reigning from the tree. The Christian's victory over evil, as Christ's own victory is supremely won in suffering.

Thus combined with his orthodox Christology, we glimpse at this early stage two important factors which contributed towards the development of Lampe's liberalism, namely, the impact of the Spirit through Christ on a man, and the fruit of union with Christ through the Spirit being the ultimate criterion of salvation.

In his article on "The exegesis of some Biblical texts by Marcellus of Ancyra and Pseudo-Chrysostom's Homily on Ps XCVI.1"[3] Lampe notes that Marcellus' doctrine of the Kingdom of Christ is based on the assertion of a double sovereignty, that of the eternal Kingship of the Logos, part of the absolute sovereignty of God, and of the transient reign of the Incarnate Christ. The Logos has taken flesh "in order that the flesh may attain immortality through its association with the Word" (Marcellus fr. 117). Through the Incarnation, the Word reveals in the flesh "the whole Godhead bodily". Mankind is "recapitulated" in Christ, who, as man for man, has overcome the enemy by whom he was enslaved and

deceived. Through Christ we are called to the adoption of sons. This "economic" reign of Christ will end when its function has been fulfilled, and then the Word "will be what He was before", ruling with the Father as Logos only. and having delivered up His "economic" Kingdom to the Father.

Marcellus cites Ps. xcvi.1, "The Lord reigned, let the earth rejoice"; Ps.l.6, "I was appointed King by Him"; Ps.cix.1, "sit thou on My right Hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool"; and also Acts iii.21, "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration". Chiefly, however, he relies on I Cor.xv. 24-8, "Then cometh the end when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father". Would it be unfair to comment, that one reason why, at this early stage, Lampe took the trouble to write this article about Marcellus was that in it he found not a little that engaged his own sympathy? Examples of this might be the following: i. The Logos, though incarnate, remains deity; ii. Christ went back to heaven; iii. The centrality of human character for soteriology; iv. The Word revealed, in the flesh, the whole Godhead bodily; v. The Divine had entered directly into history; vi. The resurrection life was being lived already in anticipation through the indwelling of the Spirit; vii. The power of evil (the enemy) had been broken by Christ.

Lampe also concerned himself with early Patristic eschatology.[4] He admits it is difficult to deal with Patristic writings as though they were a homogeneous whole. The primitive Church was possessed by the consciousness of living in the last times. The day had already dawned; the divine had already entered into history. The new life of the Resurrection was

being lived partially and in anticipation through the indwelling of the Spirit. The Church stood in an intermediate period, both of fulfilment and expectation, awaiting the imminent return of the Lord who had been exalted to the right hand of God, and the final total redemption of creation.

As the parousia was delayed, eschatology began to be replaced by pneumatology.[5] God is pneuma and dynamis (Athenag. leg. 16.2.): Christ, being pneuma, became flesh (2 Clem.9.5.). According to Origen the soul of the saved man is intermingled with, or comes to be in, the Spirit, and so becomes "spiritual" (Jo.1.28 (30), or 9.2.).

The orthodox Fathers were bound by the Apostolic Gospel of the mighty acts of God in Christ worked out in historical events culminating in the Incarnation. Their Church was bound by the Sacraments to Christ who is Himself the Kingdom. The Passover was a commemoration of God's redemptive work, typifying the decisive act of redemption in Christ. The new people of God have been freed from bondage and sealed in soul with the Spirit of Christ and in body with His blood.

Melito of Sardis's "Homily on The Passion", from which the previous sentences have been taken, ends with the Lord's promise for the future: "I am The Resurrection: I am your King: I lead you up to the heights of Heaven: I will show you the Father who is from the ages: I will raise you up on My right hand".

As regards the Eucharist, it is the life of the risen Lord, imparted through His death (Ignatius, Magn. 9.1.). We remember Ignatius's famous phrase "the medicine of immortality". The final judgement is given a prominent place in the thought of

the Fathers. "We ought so to think of Jesus as of God: as of the judge of the living and the dead" (2.Clem.1.1.). Athenagoras explains that God's promises and purposes do not concern the soul alone. Man was created for an end unattainable in this life, and equally unattainable by the soul in separation from the body. The whole man must therefore realise his true end hereafter in the life of soul and body together apatheia with God (leg.31). Iranaeus combines his literalistic millenarianism as well as his doctrines of "Christus Victor" and of "recapitulatio" with a theory of "deification" (cf. adv.haer. 3.19.1.). Through Christ, man receives the light which is the Father (adv. haer. 4.20.2.). Communion with God renders man incorruptible (dem.40): the vision of God makes him immortal (adv. haer. 4-20.5.6.).

Origen interprets the Kingdom of God as the indwelling Logos or as the teaching of Christ (Comm. in Mat. 10.14.). He identifies the Kingdom with Christ who is autobasileia (cf. (Cyprian's statement that Christ is "Regnum Dei" (or.13). Christ is the "idumentum animae" as the soul is the "idumentum corporis" (de princ.1.3.2.). We can smile at Methodius's attack on Origen's conception of the spiritual body, viz., the soul must be equipped with a body in order to have teeth hereafter for gnashing.

A summary of all this, as he himself admits, is difficult. The following points, however, may be taken from his article, showing the main drift of patristic thinking, some of which conclusions will be seen as moving in the same direction as his own thought.

Nearly all the early Fathers were fundamentalists (Lampe, of course, was not), and this was one of the chief reasons for their apparent confusion and inconsistency, but it was a safeguard against spiritualizing away the eschatology of the New Testament (p.17). In the various Gnostic systems the Christian expectation of the Parousia is replaced by the soul's ascent to heaven, but this theory was checked by the appeal to the apostolic tradition, soon to become embodied in the Canon (p.18). At the same time even orthodox thinkers found it difficult to resist the influence on eschatological expectations, of two beliefs, namely, that Christians were living in the "last times", and that the new life in the Resurrection was here through the indwelling of the Spirit (p.19).

Various influences tending to remould Biblical eschatology during the patristic period were resisted. Christian thinkers were bound by historical tradition: faith was rooted in an historical revelation pointing forward to a future hope. The gospel of creation and redemption could not be dissociated from the hope of the Parousia (p.21). Nonetheless a progressive transformation was taking place from the "linear" to the "vertical" concept of the relationship between time and eternity, which to some extent had already been adumbrated in the fourth Gospel (p.21). The Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist represent what has already happened, but point forward to what is to come. The Church of the Fathers was kept true to the primitive eschatological convictions by being bound by the Sacraments to Christ who is Himself the Kingdom (p.22). Preaching was the element in patristic literature where the plainest exposition of eschatology was to be found. The age

of fulfilment is declared to be present here and now, inaugurated through the redemptive work of Christ (p.23).

Stress is also laid on the martyr as being the perfect Christian. He or she is the fully spirit-possessed one. Lampe notes that this kind of eschatological thinking (the martyr went straight to heaven) produced the world-renouncing ethic characteristic of Tertullian (p.29). All that the believer now possesses of redemption, the new life in Christ, is a foretaste which will receive completion, fulfilment, at the Parousia. Patristic thought is not evolutionary in the modern sense, but it views the saving activity of God in Christ as a single continuous process (p.29). A good life is necessary to preserve Baptism intact (p.31). The Eucharist is the medicine of immortality (p.31). Through communion with God man receives immortality and life. Mysticism is here beginning to replace eschatology.

Nonetheless, in thethought of the Apostolic Fathers, the final judgement stands out prominently (p.31), but except for Papias, millenarianism does not appear effectively in their thinking (p.32). Some Greek Apologists asserted the natural immortality of the soul: others differed. There is confusion here, but all believed that for the Christian the soul is wholly dependent, in the end, for immortality, on the will of God (p.32). As to the Resurrection, since the whole man fell, the whole man must be raised (p.32). There is consistency in the apologists' insistence on the reality of freedom of the will and their doctrine of final judgement with rewards and punishments. In short, although the "Great Church" is no longer living in the urgency of a day to day expectation of the Parousia, it has not

lost the hope of a transcendent goal and that conception of the merely temporary existence of the present order as a preliminary to its attainment which were the marks of the Apostolic Church (Cyprian) (p.35).

Writings on Biblical topics

We pass now to a review of Lampe's early Christology as that is revealed in his writings on the Bible. This is by far the largest area of his studies, but they can be grouped into five subsections: work on typology, the Lucan portrait of Christ, matters related to the authority of Scripture, creation in the New Testament, and the question of miracles.

i. Typological exegesis. Lampe distinguishes between genuine and false typology.[6] An instance of the former is in the reading of the Old Testament as a witness to Christ - He was the "rock" from which the Israelites drank (p.311). An example of the latter is in the unfortunate history of the Song of Songs, from Origen and Gregory of Nyssa onwards. Typology must be kept free from allegory: confusion is disastrous.

The history of the Covenant people is carried through in the Bible to the inauguration of the New Covenant in Christ, who invests previous history with its full significance (p.201) The saving purpose of God becomes fully manifested in Christ (p.202), e.g. the vision of the Righteous Servant is completely realised only when the Servant's role is enacted and fulfilled by Christ who personified the Remnant (p.203). The theme of deliverance is repeated in the stories of the Flood, the Ark, the Exile, the Return. These "fore-shadowings" find their true character revealed in the saving events accomplished by Christ.

Again, typology is legitimately employed when, e.g. Christ is seen in Adam, Isaac, the Passover Lamb, Moses, Johan (p.204). These "acts of God" are post-figured in the Sacraments and liturgy of the Church, e.g. the bread from heaven is pre-figured in the manna; also the sign conveys what it signifies (1.Cor.19,1.ff.). namely redemption. Lampe stresses that there must be a legitimate theological correspondence between the types and fulfilment. He notes that Chrysostom affords a useful analogy, viz., he compares a "type" with an artist's rough preliminary outline for a painting (Hom. 10.2. In Phil. 276E). An obscure "type correspondence" must not be helped by mere verbal correspondence such as some of the Fathers employed when they made Isaac a type of Christ simply because his name meant "laughter", and Christ is the source of happiness. When the Fathers tell us that Christ's Godhead is typified by a fish-hook and his manhood by the bait; or the red heifer of Leviticus is a type of Christ's earthly body, they are misusing the term "type"; also it is misleading to refer to the Levitical priesthood in order to define Christ's priesthood.

The Essays on Typology were supported by two articles in the London Quarterly and Holborn Review on "Allegorical Interpretation", and "Hermeneutics and Typology".

So far as the second of these is concerned, Lampe simply repeats his strictures on those who would confuse typology and allegory in the interests of Christological apologetic.[7] God's dealings with His people culminate in the Incarnation. There is a certain value in allegory, but chiefly only as a help in providing illustrations for the preacher. It is easily misused as e.g., by S. Paul's misapplication of the law concerning the

threshing ox (1 Cor. 9.9.). Where allegory can be seen in The New Testament (the wicked husband - man - Matt. 21.33 ff, the miracle at Cana of Galilee - Jn.2.11), and even the rest of the Johannine miracles, these instances demonstrate the nature of the revelation of God in Christ and indicate the nature and purpose of His saving work. Lampe concludes we are on safe ground in dealing with those Old Testament passages which Jesus seems deliberately to have selected as key notes for His own mission, and which He enacted, viz., the Servant Songs, the Son of Man passages, the prophecy of the entry into Jerusalem. His warning remains, however, - the critical reader will never allegorize (p.109).

In his article "Hermeneutics and Typology", Lampe once again states that Jesus saw His mission as the climax and end of the prophetic succession.[8] His followers interpreted His Lordship as the earthly abasement of Him whom they now knew through the Spirit to be glorified Lord of all the earth. They believed they were taught by the risen Christ Himself to understand the Scriptures in a new way: His obscurity and crucifixion happened in fulfilment of the Scriptures. The Old Testament was really a book about Jesus. The Lucan picture of the Jews at Beroea examining the Scriptures to test the truth of the Apostolic preaching is typical of the entire missionary approach to the Jews in the 1st century and long afterwards, - as Justin's "Dialogue" and Cyprian's "Testimonia", among a great quantity of other Christian literature, bear witness (p.19).

Lampe mentions (pace the writer to the Hebrews), there is no real analogy between Melchizedek and Christ. The only correspondence lies in the fact that Melchizedek is described as

King and priest. There is no historical relationship in terms of promise and fulfilment, between the absence of genealogy of Melchizedek and the uniqueness and eternity of Christ's priesthood (p.20). The danger is that non-historical typology, passing over into allegory may dissolve the literal sense, and the question of historicity, even in respect of the central Gospel event of the Resurrection may come to be dismissed as irrelevant (p.22). Fulfilment involves transformation as well as similarity. Even those Old Testament images which dominate all Christian interpretations of Christ and His work such as the Levitical priesthood, the Passover, and the Sin-Offering, have to receive a new and more profound content if they are to prove adequate to interpret the Gospel. Especially is this true of the type or image of the Messiah (p.23). The Christian sees God's supreme act in Christ as the central point in history.

In the above section we see an example of orthodox evangelical Lampe, coming to terms with a patristic method foreign to his evangelicalism. Christ must not be misrepresented, nor the picture of His work disfigured, by merely fanciful misunderstandings of the nature and purpose of The Old Testament. Eagerness to find Christ almost anywhere in Scripture must be controlled by a proper understanding of its nature. Here we find the edge of twentieth century Biblical criticism meeting up with and checking a largely primitive and uncritical view of the Bible. Lampe's contribution here is largely the separating out of a mostly non-rational fundamentalist type of exegesis from hermeneutics based on reason and common sense.

ii. So far as Luke's view of the Person and work of Christ

is concerned, Lampe found the major themes in the speeches in Acts. There would not seem to be much doubt that Luke was his favourite evangelist, in whose writings he may be said to have found the significance of the work of the Holy Spirit. He concentrated on the speeches of Peter, Paul and Stephen, and admitted that the precise relationship of Christ to His disciples as it is envisaged in this large mass of material is not easy to define. When Christ ascends to His glory the Church is left to follow and to imitate. Luke does not think of a personal union between Christ and the Father. In place of the Matthean "Lo, I am with you always" we find the startling contrast of "while I was yet with you", which implies that since the resurrection he is no longer with His disciples. Christ is enthroned in Heaven. He is seen by Stephen and Saul in special manifestations, but "the heavens must receive Him", and it may be long before He comes again "in like manner as ye see Him going into Heaven".

Yet we must not exaggerate the apparent remoteness of the Lucan Christ from His people. The bond of union between them is the Spirit which He has sent (Lk. 24.29). It is the Spirit of Jesus which is the possession of all who repent and are baptized in His name. Lampe thought it doubtful if the words to Saul "why persecutest thou me?" should be pressed so as to yield a doctrine of mystical union or of the Body of Christ. Saul persecuted Jesus by persecuting those who acted and spoke in his name, and it is in these concepts of Spirit and Name that we find expressed the link between Christ and His Church rather than in any idea of mystical union or identity. This, Lampe admits, is a different doctrine from that of Paul, but we must not forget, he says, that the bond between Christ in Heaven and the Church is

so close that the experience of Jesus, His mighty works, wonders and signs, His Sufferings and His mission of salvation, repentance of sins, to the end of the earth are exactly reproduced in His people, first in the Church's mission to Israel under Peter's leadership, then in the wider sphere of Paul's carrying of the Gospel to Rome (pp.174-5).

The speeches referred to seem to bear the stamp of a unified theology, reflecting a common outlook, having each a distinctive flavour. There are the signs and wonders, the ministry of healing, the rejection, death and exaltation, the reception of the Spirit to transmit to followers, the testimony to the Resurrection and the proclamation of repentance for the remission of sins. In this outline we notice Luke's special emphasis upon Jesus' exaltation to glory. The Ascension, with its sequel at Pentecost is the climax of the Gospel story (p.166). The prophecy of Ps.111 is fulfilled. Moreover Christ fulfils His own prediction - His perfecting on the third day. (Lk. 13.32).

Through death to the Heavenly throne - this picture of Christ's work is Luke's chief concern. There are, however, fundamental differences between the ancient theme (the Joseph stories of disaster and restoration) and its fulfilment in the Gospel events. The hero is now identified with the Servant, with all the implications for the meaning of the death and exaltation. He suffers and ascends as the prince of His people. He goes on to prepare a place for His followers. The outline of the theme is already drawn in the story of the episode at Nazareth. Jesus announces Himself as the prophet sent by God, indicates the universal scope of His mission, is rejected, and, like Stephen (Acts 7.48), is thrown out of the city to be killed. Yet He

passes on His way through the midst of His would-be destroyers, and goes on His way. The word used to describe this "going on His way" is used in Lk.12.22,23, of His journey to death, and in Acts 1 and 16. 10-11 (as also in Pet.3.22, and Jn. 14.2,3,12, and 16.7,28) of the ascension to Heaven and to the Father. In respect of this theme, then, the speeches in Acts reflect the general pattern set forth in Lk.4, and developed in detail throughout the subsequent narrative (p.167).

We also find in the speeches the typically Lucan insistence on Christ's status as one anointed with the Spirit and thereby endowed with power, through whose exaltation the Spirit has been transmitted to His people. This theme is of central importance in Luke's theology. Lampe repeats He is the bearer of the Spirit, the agent of the bestowal of the Spirit by the Father upon His followers (p.167).

In this respect Luke points to Christ as the prophet like unto Moses (Deut.18. 15ff). The hope of a new prophet delivering an authoritative word of God like a second Moses is more than previous vain hopes. The idea that one of the old prophets might return is indicated in Mark 6. 15; 8.28, where it is implicitly rejected as an interpretation of the person of Jesus. In the speeches of Peter, however, and of Stephen (Acts 3.32; 7.37), this text (Deut.18.15ff) becomes a cardinal testimony to the meaning of the person and work of Jesus, and it is alluded to in Jn.6.18. where its full Messianic application seems to be assumed. Luke, Lampe observes, lays greater stress on this aspect of Jesus as the new Moses than do the other evangelists. Jesus is seen to combine in Himself the characteristics of Moses, the Servant,

and the Servant of second Isaiah. As the prophet, Jesus is the bearer of God's word to Israel. The proclamation of a Gospel is the first of the prophetic tasks which in the language of Isaiah (61.1ff) He announces as His own (p.168).

The prophet like unto Moses also bears the likeness of Elijah who received a word of God in Horeb, was persecuted, and ascended to Heaven, as well as of the Servant of Isaiah. The Elijah motif occurs in the episode at Nain, in the story of the Samaritan villagers, and especially in the language and details of the Ascension narrative. Again, Jesus is identified with the Servant in Philip's preaching to the Ethiopian where the passage cited from Isaiah 50.53 is remarkable in that it contains no reference to the redemptive nature of the Servant's suffering. This, however, is not out of keeping with Luke's general treatment of Christ's death (pp.169-70). Like the Servant, Jesus is pre-eminently the Saviour. Lampe reminds us that many commentators have remarked on the prominence of the theme of salvation in Luke's narrative, from the Infancy narratives, e.g. Luke, 1.17, to Paul's declaration in Rome that "this Salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles" (Acts.38,28): and Jesus who was announced by the angels as Saviour is exalted to the right hand of God to be Prince and Saviour (Acts 5.31). Together with this presentation of Jesus as the Prophet, Servant and Saviour, Luke retains the tradition of His Davidic Messiahship (strongly brought out in the speeches of Acts) and he is quite explicit in his assertion that Jesus was actually greeted as "King" at the entry into Jerusalem (p.170).

Lampe then asks, how are we to sum up Luke's picture of the relation of Jesus to the Father? Peter's speech on the Day of

Pentecost, if it stood alone, might suggest a purely Adoptionist view. Such an interpretation would seem to conflict directly with the implication of the Infancy stories, with the insistence that it is the Christ who suffered, and with the Lucan emphasis on the glory of Jesus. Lampe doubts if there is any real inconsistency here. He does not express a doctrine of pre-existence as was once seen to be implied in Phil.2.6-11. Jesus is pre-ordained as Messiah (Acts 3.26) rather than pre-existent. The Infancy narratives surround His birth with glory and miracle, and designate Him Messiah, Lord and Son of God. He is declared to be Son of God at the Baptism and at the Transfiguration where His chosen followers saw His glory. Lampe asserts that these are all in a sense proleptic attributions to Him of titles which He received at the Ascension, and of glory into which He entered when He was perfected (Lk.13.32) through death and resurrection (p.171).

Luke makes it specially clear that the Transfiguration is an anticipatory revelation of what is to be when Jesus is risen and exalted. He was made Christ in the full sense when He entered into His glory. He was the bearer of the Spirit during His ministry, yet He received the Spirit as the Father's promise, to be transmitted to His people when He is exalted to the right hand of God. Lampe observed that it is somewhat in the same sense that John can say "Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified". His glory was seen by anticipation on the mountain but it had still to be won. It was achieved or entered upon through death and resurrection: it is at His exaltation that He received in full reality those titles of Christ and Lord which were proleptically bestowed upon Him at His birth. There

is no real contradiction between the words of the angel at Bethlehem and those of Peter on the Day of Pentecost: it is highly probable that both, as they are recorded for us, bear the marks of Luke's theology (p.171).

Lampe makes this important comment: despite the language of Christ's thanksgiving in Lk.10.22, the union between Him and the Father is, as it were, an external bond. Luke does not picture such a unity as we find in the Pauline and Johannine Christology. They are joined by the Spirit on the one side, and by the human response of prayer, the corresponding element to the Spirit, on the other. Yet it remains true that the word of Jesus is the word of God: His authority and power are divine: He is the agent of God's forgiveness and of God's judgement. Above all, the Spirit which He possesses and which can be called "the Spirit of Jesus" (Acts 16.6-7) is the Spirit of God.

The above may be said to cry out for some kind of summary paragraph, indicating the trend the material shows. Lampe seems to be somewhat confusing in his remarks about the relationship between Christ and the Father, and Christ and His people. About the former, as we have seen, he rejects the idea of Christ's pre-existence, preferring the expression (expressing his own belief) that Jesus was pre-ordained to be Messiah. He does not assent to the belief in a personal union between Christ and the Father, yet later speaks of the Spirit as both Christ's and the Father's. It is difficult, to say the least, to think of the Spirit of God in any but authentically personal terms: after all, Lampe sees all the proleptic titles finally realised at the exaltation. Much the same sort of criticism may be aimed

at his conception of the relation between Christ and His followers. The same Spirit (after all there is only one Holy Spirit, who does not ever change His nature), is in both Christ and them. He cannot be sub - or de-personalised. To describe the Spirit merely as a "link" is to speak of the same indwelling personal Spirit of God as a kind of hook-up between two railway carriages, or as the "joining" of two people by a mere handshake. The inwardness, the personal-ness, the genuine spirituality of the union is played down in both cases.

He seems to want it both ways. Christ has "gone away", yet somehow we mustn't think of Him as completely departed. The Spirit of God is "in" both His people and Himself: that is more ontological than psychological. A Christian cannot, in any really deep sense, refer to, think of, the Spirit of God as a link, an external bond.

So the drift of the chapter becomes clearer. The Church is to follow on and imitate. Is there here a suggestion of exemplarism? It is true Lampe admits the difficulty of defining precisely these relationships, and he will have nothing to do with any mystical relationship such as is adumbrated in Paul, but he seems to land himself in an indefensible position when he speaks of the Holy Spirit in terms of links and external bonds. In other words there would seem to be a suspicion of a reductionist view (impersonal) of the Spirit.

iii. One of the last things Lampe did before finally signalling his rejection of the story of the empty tomb was to address a conference between theologians of the Church of England and of the German Evangelical Church on the subject of the authority

of Scripture and Tradition.[9] The Report was dated 1965. The writer of a comparatively short thesis on Lampe's early Christology is faced in this particular instance with a difficulty. This is undoubtedly one of his most revealing writings at that period, yet to present him fairly would mean almost a wholesale reproduction. Everything in his paper is so essential to understanding his development, and is so compactly uttered. Nevertheless the attempt to extract the essence must be made, while somewhat vainly attempting to avoid over-lengthiness.

According to Lampe there are two parts of the Church's tradition - Scripture and the later tradition which may be called the commentary on or unfolding of Scripture (p.17). The later tradition gave rise to what may be called a double process of checking: (1) the witness in Scripture of the earliest believers and their successors can be checked, verified, by the criterion of the Church's present experience, (the Lord made present by the Spirit); (2) this experience will have to be conditioned by and derived from reflection on Scripture, in the light of new insights and changing circumstances. If this is not done, present experience tends to fashion Scripture after its own likeness. Lampe says: "Present experience will not convey God's Word to us unless subjected to the judgement of God's Incarnate Word" (p.18). The ultimate authority is our present personal experience of Jesus our Lord, and the total commitment this entails. It carried an absolute authority. The experience has sometimes modified, re-interpreted, the original witness, but it is essentially controlled by that original witness.

There is no thought of asserting a dual norm of authority.

Scripture was always supreme and decisive. The authority of creeds, Councils, Fathers, is secondary. The appeal to the early Church, however, has grave defects. It assumed a greater degree of unanimity of belief among the Fathers than existed. The temptation was to select a catena of passages from their works, out of their proper context, and arrange them to support a pre-conceived point of view. So it was possible to get the Fathers, and even the Bible itself to support any conceivable opinion, viz., Cranmer's catena of citations on sola fide. In fact, the patristic teaching was more often used as reinforcement than as a source for Reformers' doctrine (p.9).

What do we mean by authority in matters of belief? There was a sixteenth century framework of pre-supposition that salvation depended on a correct intellectual attitude towards certain propositions, e.g. those contained in the Athanasian Creed. "But" says Lampe, "the prior question is whether assent to any such proposition can properly be 'required', or whether orthodoxy is necessary to salvation" (p.9).

Lampe pertinently draws attention to some words of Professor D.E. Nineham: phrases like "timelessly valid" and "unanswerably binding" as descriptive of the relation of dogma to the Bible belong to the past. To attempt to find in Scripture direct proof of what are, in fact, much later developments of Christian doctrine is an activity proper only to an age which has not begun to think historically, and it is the historical revolution of the past century which has made the Scriptural view of authority which we find in the Anglican formularies untenable. In this connection Lampe reminds us that Nineham mentions specifically the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father,

the hypostatic union of deity and humanity in the one Person of Christ, and that he queries the inclusion of propositions about which nothing is said in Scripture, such as that the substance of the Eucharistic bread is changed by consecration into that of the body of Christ. It is hard to see how on a pre-critical, pre-historical understanding of the meaning of Scriptural proof it is possible to prove from the Bible a doctrine such as the penal interpretation of Christ's death, or the full Chalcedonian understanding of His Person, without making Scripture subservient to later tradition (p.12).

It is this inevitable tension to hold history and present experience together which sets us the problem of Scripture and Tradition and the authority which should belong to each. If, by tradition we may mean the on-going experience of the Church, then we have to admit that Scripture itself is written out of that experience, and is, therefore, itself, a part of the tradition. Tradition and Scripture cannot rightly be set over against each other as though they represented two quite different modes of God's self-disclosure. "In an age of Form-criticism, this would be unthinkable" (p.14).

Lampe believed that in the Gospels the past is interpreted in the light of the present. Present faith projects its beliefs in the concrete form of stories about the past which those beliefs actually create. "So I should interpret, amongst others, those of the Infancy narratives". They express the belief that in Jesus the expectations of the prophets have been fulfilled in the story of the Virgin Birth, the conviction that in his earthly life Jesus was one who was a human being, yet also one who came from

God, one whose life was, in one sense, continuous with that of all men before Him, and yet in another sense, was so wholly new as to be God's fresh creation breaking the line of descent from Adam and bringing in God's new humanity. Here tradition has created scripture out of its own insights. Significantly he adds: "I think that the same applies to the stories of the empty tomb" (p.15).

Scripture presents us with the witness of the Church to its Lord expressed in certain parts of The New Testament in the form of a history of the past. Scripture is therefore, tradition. Those who lived in the tradition could never forget that the tradition was firmly rooted in certain historical events. The continuing tradition of the Lord's Supper, and the experience of His active presence of which it was the focus were read back into the pre-Easter situation, and no doubt determined much of the content and character of the Gospel narratives of the Last Supper, the miraculous feedings, and the Resurrection appearances. But this tradition was itself received tradition. "It is most improbable that there would have been any tradition in this case without an historical event or events to give rise to it" (p.16).

The importance of this first part of the tradition lies in the fact that the writers who preserved it were witnesses to the twofold impact of Jesus Christ, the historical figure and the risen Lord. They were witnesses to the earthly and to the exalted Christ, for even if they did not see the earthly Christ in the flesh they stood near enough to those who had done so. The canonical tradition which they formed is normative for all the rest. "Subsequent tradition cannot create Gospels: it is rather the explication of the primary witness through dogmatic

formulation" (p.17).

In so far as the Spirit makes Scripture a channel of God's Word, it is the ultimate authority for us. Credal and other doctrinal formulations are important, if they help us to understand the meaning of our primary commitment to Christ as Lord. If they succeed they are authoritative. "It is not an absolute authority, however, and if, at any time, such formulations, despite their Scripture basis, cease to help, they lose their authority for the time being, and may need to be revised or discarded" (p.19). With these words the door was fairly widely open for Lampe's more radical move forward towards his later position.

The relation between experience and authority had already received Lampe's attention. In 1958 he had written:

> Metaphysical argument is no longer a source of ultimate authority in matters of religion: the authority of reason means the experience rather than the cogency of a priori demonstration. Experience must be for everyone the final ground of authority. By that alone in the last resort theological statements, of whatever kind, can be tested and verified. The assumptions that there is a personal God, that His nature is revealed in Christ, etc., are not formally provable: they have to be tested and verified empirically. 10.

He proceeded to assert that the greatest degree of credence will be due to the acknowledged expert, who, so far as his thought and practice can be empirically examined and tested, appears to possess unusual spiritual insight and religious understanding. The authoritative wisdom of the Church is of great weight but it is not infallible, and in the light of reason, i.e. of experience in the widest sense, its outward expressions in formularies, creeds and systems of doctrines may need to be revised. The heart and focus of what are believed to be

revelatory events is the supreme work of God in the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, and the coming of the Spirit.

The message of the Bible, he maintained, is thus primarily the testimony of those whose personal experience enabled them to witness to the facts of those central events, and to testify to their true significance. This testimony is the apostolic tradition, the source and norm of the whole tradition of the Church of which it is both a part and the determinative origin. The apostles were the men selected by Jesus to bear witness to the saving events of his life, death and resurrection (p.254). It is the experience of those eye-witnesses commissioned as the interpreters of Christ upon which the authority of the New Testament rests. If the apostles' understanding of the events that they witnessed was in any way true, then those events were profoundly revelatory of God. They were the direct acts of God in His self-disclosure, working out the redemption of His creation (p.255). The events, however, would be relevatory only to those who had the insight to perceive their true character. The act of God, in the sense of the concrete event, and the human perception of its true character, together constitute a divine revelation. They are both integrally necessary to God's self-disclosure: both are parts or aspects of the same divine action.

The witnesses to Christ were inspired: so much is clear, even though their inspiration, God's gift to them of special insight corresponding to the unique events, operated in and through their limited and fallible intellectual and spiritual

understanding, and through minds conditioned by the thought and expression of their time. All the books which the Church came to accept were regarded as authoritative because they contained the deposit of the original apostolic tradition. They were recognised as being congruent in their testimony with the rest of the primitive tradition. Here is the basic authority of the New Testament. Lampe notes that the tradition embodied in these writings does not belong to the immediate post-resurrection period (p.256).

The relation of the historic Jesus to the community's experience of the presence of the ascended Christ through the indwelling Spirit had to be thought out in the context of the Church's life and worship. Here, once again, we encounter the important combination of revelatory event and inspired interpretation. Lampe stressed that the meaning of the original deposit is progressively unfolded and sometimes clarified, but it cannot be added to or subtracted from by the later stream of tradition. These words will be recognised as having a direct and important bearing on his later radical theology. Tradition is concerned with the preservation and explication of the original message. It must safeguard it so far as is possible against misinterpretation. The Church of the Fathers sought to preserve the Apostolic tradition from heretical accretions and to clarify its implications, as it did, for example, in the creed of Nicaea.

It is always the original testimony which stands over and judges the subsequent tradition, and when that tradition has obscured some essential part of the original Christian experience, the appeal has always to be made from the authority of the Church

to that of Scripture. These authorities should not be set over against each other. The Church has to correct misunderstandings of Scripture on the part of individuals, and interpret the Scriptures to them. The Scriptures have to be appealed to in order to correct the Church's corporate misunderstandings and perversions of the original testimony. For each individual there remains the test of Bible and Church in the light of his own experience, under the guidance of the Spirit, reaffirming the truth mediated through those greater authorities (p.256).

In 1963, three years before the publication of his explosive sermon on the Resurrection, Lampe put out an essay on "The Bible since the Rise of Critical Study." [11] I do not think it is merely fanciful to see in this essay the ripening seeds that produced the later full fruit of his surprising radicalism. What follows can only be a rapid summary of his main points, showing how they link up with his earlier writing about the Bible. With the advantage of hindsight in relation to his later Christology we can, at times, almost feel him teetering on the edge of what was to come.

He takes as his starting point the publication of Essays and Reviews, 1860, and deals almost entirely with the rise and development of critical studies in this country, bearing in mind however, that those studies have to a considerable extent been occupied with the assimilation, modification and transmission of ideas that originated elsewhere, chiefly in Germany (p.125). Hort indicated his approval of the emancipation of the Word of God from the graveclothes wound around it by a priori dogmatism and by the superstition and immorality of much popular theology.

H.B. Wilson, in his essay on "The National Church" appealed to the Anglican formularies and said, "the Word of God is contained in Scripture, whence it does not follow that it is co-extensive with it" (p.126). Jowett's essay on "The Interpretation of Scripture" was more concerned to insist that the primary duty of the interpreter is to discover what the original author meant. The essayists regarded as a major enemy of the Word of God the pious allegorism which had to be called in to the aid of literalism when the literal interpretation produced nonsense or worse (p.128).

It was not until Lux Mundi (1889) that the opposition began to die down, apart from that prolonged reluctance of the Evangelicals to come to terms with biblical criticism which inhibited them as a body from making any significant contribution to the development of Anglican theology until quite recent times (p.131). In Seeley's Ecce Homo there began the quest for the historical Jesus. This was shattered by Albert Schweitzer's Quest for the Historical Jesus (Von Reimarus zu Wrede, 1906). It was this approach to the Gospels that meant a liberation of the figure of the carpenter of Nazareth from the prevailing tradition of Apollinarian Christology. The 1884 translation of Wellhausen's History of Israel helped English readers to become acquainted with the revolution in the whole understanding of the Old Testament (p.133). Westcott attacked the problem of the conflict between the idea of a revelation given once and for all and a revelation which is continuous, and still going on (p.133). Farrar (p.134) traced the change that came over much theological opinion to the influence of S.T. Coleridge, especially in his

Confessions of an Inquiring Mind (1840). "The Bible a book written by human hands for human beings ... which, though written for all times ... still refers to certain times and seasons and must for these given times and persons be interpreted" (p.135). Farrar's one criterion for discerning the Word of God in the New Testament was the teaching of Christ, the Word Incarnate. He (Farrar) does not apparently consider the question of the authenticity of the verba Christi. The Gospels, or at any rate the Synoptic Gospels, are for no explicit reason exempted from the process of historical criticism (p.136).

The impact of criticism on the tradition of the words of Jesus was scarcely felt until the Christological problem of the human ignorance raised by His ascription of Old Testament books to Moses and David was dealt with by Gore (p.136). In spite of his principle that Christ rather than the Bible was God's Word, Farrar was groping towards the realisation that nowhere in this life can we find infallibility (The History of Interpretation, Bampton Lectures: 1885). "The idea of progressive revelation insisted on by Westcott and developed in Lux Mundi went far to remove difficulties ... the new approach had made it impossible, or should have, to treat the Bible as a vast collection of proof texts ... the author's meaning is what the interpreter most primarily seek to recover: not to have regard for differences of outlook and intention between the different authors was dangerous" (p.138). The work of J.B. Lightfoot had laid a foundation for a new understanding of St. Paul in the actual situation of his own times (p.139). Illingworth's essay on "The Incarnation and Development" produced the misleading theory of continuous progress in the Biblical history from

lower to higher levels of religious thought. This was an idea which seemed to fit in with such critical work as that of Robertson Smith's The Religion of The Semites. As we have already noticed, the other and more important feature of Lux Mundi was the raising of the Christological aspect of the problem of biblical criticism. A central problem was the ascription of the authorship of Psalm 110 to David. Biblical criticism would compel a revision of Christology at a vital point, demolishing, again as we have seen, the strongly Apollinarian doctrine of Liddon and Pusey.

The discussion of the Kenotic Christologies, the starting point of which is the human ignorance of Jesus, is by no means concluded yet. So Lampe affirmed, and he pointed as witness to Dr. Vincent Taylor's re-examination of the matter in The Person of Jesus Christ in New Testament Teaching. The heart of the matter was well expressed by R.H. Hutton in Contemporary Thought and Thinkers, cited by H.G. Wood in Belief and Unbelief since 1850.

> A divine revelation through a human nature is impossible without involving human error ... I should as soon expect our Lord to have understood in his human intellect the astronomy of the age as to have understood and corrected the scholarship and literary criticisms of the age. But does it follow from this that the divine nature was not manifested in such a human nature in the only manner in which God could be manifested in the life of a given age and race and country, that is, by a perfect fusion between the human nature whose conditions God had assumed and the divine nature which had assumed them?

This question was not always answered in the negative. Stubbs in his Second Visitation Charge in the diocese of Oxford, 1893 declared:

> His omniscience is of the essence of the personality in which manhood and Godhead were united in Him. With this belief I feel that I am bound to accept the language of Our Lord in reference to The Old Testament Scriptures as beyond appeal ... Where He speaks of David in spirit calling Him Lord, and I am not affected by doubts thrown on the authorships of the 110th Psalm, except so far as to use His authority to set these doubts aside (p.141).

The effect of Lux Mundi was to make biblical criticism respectable save in the eyes of the more extreme conservatives, especially Evangelicals. A rather dismally pedestrian stage in biblical scholarship had been dramatically transformed by Albert Schweitzer with his abrupt transference of the Kingdom of God from the sphere of social ethics to that of futuristic eschatology, by the rise of Form Criticism teaching us that what the Gospels give us is the picture of Jesus formed by the faith of the early Church, and by the almost simultaneous insistence of Barthian theology, and later, in a different mode, of Hoskyns in this country, that in Scripture the Word of God encounters men in sovereignty, majesty, judgement and mercy. As regards Form criticism, Lampe concluded that it had led to a new sense of the importance of the Evangelists, not as compilers, but as creative artists and theologians. The development of criticism in the past century had taught us that God speaks to us in a manner congruous with the Incarnation itself, through human words and human minds conditioned by the circumstances of place and time, subject to our ordinary limitations. They are human minds, inspired, but none the less liable to error and ignorance. The images which guide the thinking of the prophets and poets of the Scriptures are no more exempt from human error and limitation than their words (p.142).

Christ remains the true Word of God. In so far as men speak truly of Him, the Word of God is mediated to us. Seekers after infallibility and evaders of the historical problem may shut themselves up within the comfortable confines of Biblical Theology that recreates the old dogmatism from within the Bible itself, or, with Bultmann, cut contemporary faith loose from its historical moorings. This attitude involves much more than translating the Gospel out of the mythological thought forms of the pre-scientific age. It is concerned with the much more far-reaching question whether faith can ever be made to depend on historical fact. Without quoting speakers or writers, Lampe says that even the most conservative preachers often say that the obscurities or even apparent contradictions that there may be in the Easter stories do not matter. The truth of the Resurrection does not depend upon the evidence for an empty tomb or appearances to disciples. The witness to it lies in the experience of the believers when they encounter the risen Christ here and now, and enter into a foretaste of the resurrection life with Him. Lampe asks ought we to agree with Bultmann that, if this is so, it does not matter whether the Resurrection as an historical event ever happened (p.143).

Lampe concludes his essay: If historical judgement is irrelevant in this case, should we extend the principle to the whole Gospel and give to the alleged history a symbolical value only? Or is it not the present task of criticism to map out a third way, where history is respected, and where the idolatrous craving for certainty and infallibility is put aside, whether it be the certainty of a cosy biblicism, or the certainty of

existential encounter which has no need to look to Scriptural documents or to the history behind them?

I think that this is one of the most important papers written by Lampe in what we have chosen to call his "early Christology" period. It brings us close to the edge of his later position showing the ideas that must have influenced him finally in the writing of God as Spirit. We should note, in particular, the following critical positions espoused:
The omniscience of Jesus is questioned. The notion of infallibility is down-graded. The influence of historical relativity - time, place, contemporary beliefs, etc. - is fully accepted. Scripture is seen in a fresh light, not as a mere collection of proof-texts, but to be read like any other book. The original meaning of the author must be brought out. Lampe's attitude to conservative Evangelicalism has largely changed. Yet at the same time, it is plain that there is as yet no explicit departure from the orthodox doctrines of the Incarnation and Trinity.

iv. Two years before the publication of his radical re-thinking about the meaning of the Resurrection, Lampe wrote an article on creation in The Scottish Journal of Theology entitled, "The New Testament doctrine of Ktisis". It states extremely clearly the doctrine of the new creation in and through Christ as that is presented chiefly by Paul. Even at this late stage in his thinking Lampe cannot be said to be radically, publicly, departing from what the Church accepted as New Testament Christology. Where he may be said to differ at some related points of the Church's teaching may be collected from his summary (pp.460-1). Paul seems to have thought of decay and death as

being something unnatural and consequent upon the Fall, in the sub-human world as well as in man. Lampe states categorically that we cannot follow the apostle in this. Both decay and death have to be recognised as parts of the original created order, willed by God, and, therefore, good (p.457).

With reference to Romans 8.20. ("For the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope") Lampe inclined to the belief that "him who subjected" meant Adam. Lampe could not believe it referred to Christ, (as Barth held), or to Satan. In referring to Colossians 1.15. ff. (p.459) - the great expression of a Christological doctrine of creation, (Christ the originator of the new creation which His resurrection inaugurated) - Lampe shows no sign of disagreement. Christ is pre-existent; God in His fullness dwells in Him (p.460). This is the answer to those who might ask where Lampe stood at this stage in respect of the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation? Lampe does not press the difficult idea of a reconcilation of non-personal entities, though that could be read into Paul's Christology. Indeed, Lampe does not doubt that he included the whole of animate and inanimate nature within the scope both of creation and redemption in Christ. Man is linked by the nature of his physical body to the rest of creation.

Lampe sums up the New Testament doctrine of Ktisis so far as Christology is concerned: Man is the culminating point and meaning of evolutionary development. He should be the mediator to the cosmos of God's creative and sustaining purpose. His peculiar place in relation to creation is because he is capable

of conscious personal relationship towards God; this is given through and determined by Christ. Herein is the hope of release from the corruption which characterizes the world of nature. Christ is nothing less than the manifestation of God Himself, the agent of creation; the creative and sustaining Word and will of God is embodied in Him. As Incarnate He is the pattern of man in his intended relationship to God (p.461).

Lampe says we cannot speak directly of a fallen world. Change and corruption at the physical level are not unnatural or contrary to God's will except for man in respect of his unique status in Christ as a son of God. Nor can Lampe accept the hypothesis of a fallen angel (the Devil) to whom the government of the universe was once entrusted. Modern anthropology makes original righteousness impossible, but there is a continuous state of "fallenness" which is against God's will. Christ's redemptive work inaugurates the new humanity. The Church, the people of Christ, is the first fruits of that humanity. God in Christ makes the Church the instrument of the recreation of mankind. It is His Body, effecting the new Creation as she fulfils her mission through the Word and sacraments in which the Spirit makes Christ to be actively present.

We may conclude by repeating that this writing, so near to 1965-66, while showing plain signs of departure from orthodox Evangelical doctrines of original righteousness, the Fall (with implications for original sin), reveals nothing of implicit departure from the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation.

v. What Lampe says about miracles may be referred to simply as supplying further evidence of his interest in Luke and in Christ's power.[12] Otherwise his remarks may be seen as not contributing

very much to the theme of this chapter. We include some of them simply for the sake of completeness. In the first of two essays he draws our attention to the fact that in his treatment of the birth, calling and ministry of Jesus, Luke lays stress on certain features, one of which is dynamis, with its close association with the concept of the divine Spirit of God. God had anointed Jesus with Holy Spirit and power. He is a man attested by God in works of power. Wonders and signs are God's operation through Him: they are the source of His authority (p.167). As the bearer of God's Word, He is empowered by God's Spirit. He is a prophet, indeed, the great prophet like Moses (Lk.24,29: cf Acts 3.22 ff; 7.22; 7.37), like Elijah, like the prophet of Isaiah 61 (p.168).

Lampe points out, however, that the dynamis is at work, in a sense, only proleptically, in the pre-Resurrection period of Jesus' ministry. In His Messianic anointing with the Spirit and power, the age of fulfilment is anticipated: all this was but a foretaste of what was to follow when Jesus had been "taken up". We remember the Johannine comment, "Spirit was not yet because Jesus was not yet glorified." Though proclaimed Saviour at His birth, He was made Lord and Messiah when through suffering He entered into His glory. Thenceforth there is no salvation save in Him (p.169).

The signs and wonders that happened through the apostles (Acts 2.43) were the visible evidence of the new age. The Spirit that was in Jesus was now working in His disciples. Life is restored to the dead by the authority of Jesus the Messiah who, as Acts 3.13 makes clear, has been glorified by the God of Israel

in being enthroned at His right hand (p.174). The ministry of Jesus, exercised through the operation of the Spirit in His own person during the humility of His earthly life, and through that same Spirit after His exaltation to Lordship in His apostles, extends in Luke's perspective, from Galilee to Rome (p.178).

In the second of the two essays Christ's miracles take a prominent place in the arguments of the Apologists. The line which these arguments take is generally similar to that of St.Peter's speech on the day of Pentecost: "Jesus, a man attested by God by mighty wonders and works and signs..." (Acts 2.14-36). Athanasius presses these arguments further in the De Incarnatione: the Logos met men in their own situation. If they worshipped Nature, then Christ's nature miracles were there to convince them that He is Lord of Nature. If they worshipped men as Gods, His works marked Him out for them as being uniquely the Son of God. If they worshipped the demons, He gave the proof that He was master of the demons: or, if they worshipped heroes, the Resurrection proved Him to be greater than any (de Inc. 15). Athanasius ascribed to the Logos, who is Christ, the formation of his own body from the Virgin, and the raising of it from the dead, we well as the healing of diseases (p.208). Eusebius (Demonstratio Evangelica, 3,4-6) gives a list of both healings and nature miracles leading up to Christ's death, resurrection and ascension. Resurrection and ascension are regarded by Eusebius, as also by Athanasius, as being Christ's osn deeds. All these are "marvels of virtue" and "evidence of the divinity within him" ... why should they (i.e. the disciples) deny and forsake Jesus only to deify Him after He had died.. (p.210)?

"What hung on the tree was only the human form which the divine being had put on" (Arnobius, 1.54 ff). "The proofs of the Resurrection are ultimately the behaviour of Christ's disciples" (Origen, Contra Celsum, 2.48). Eusebius, again, asserts that Jesus did His works through the divine power, for Scripture attests Him as God's Word and power dwelling in flesh (p.213).

It was not enough to ask men to believe in Christ's divinity because of the miracles. They had to be asked to believe the miracle stories because they first accepted his divinity. His divine character had to be appealed to in order to vindicate the authenticity and the divinity of the miracles.

Origen said that according to the will of the Logos Christians still exorcize. Exorcism is a standing proof of the Resurrection since it exhibits Christ's present power over idols and demons (Athanasius de Inc. 30). A briefer expression of the same idea is found as early as Justin (Dial,30), who also says that the work of exorcists, including their exploits at Rome, proves the truth of Christians' belief about Christ (2 Apol.6), and that the defeat of demons throughout the world testifies to His Messiahship (Dial. 121).

Of apologetic proper, it may be said, the appeal to miracles is made at different levels, but, among the more serious Christians, with more sense and restraint than at some later stages of Church history. It can be said that in the hands of the sophisticated, the argument from miracle proves to be a double-edged weapon, to be used in a supporting role only (p.218).

Writings on the Sacraments

During roughly ten years (1951-62) Lampe published some half dozen writings on the Person and work of Christ in relation to sacramental grace in the Christian life. Right from the start he was deeply interested in and concerned with a right understanding of Baptism, not least in its relation to Confirmation. His main work on this subject was The Seal of the Spirit. I cannot find within the period any important change in his views on the general subject. Expressed, perhaps, in different ways, with varying emphases, they remained fundamentally the same. A thorough examination of The Seal will reveal his Christological position. Implications concerning the Holy Communion appear as we proceed.

The "interlocking of the whole" is a feature of any treatment of separate aspects or items of Christian doctrine. The Seal is a good example of this. Lampe asserts repeatedly that while Confirmation appears to be a part of the initiation of the person who is baptized as a believer, it loses much of its force by being separated from baptism: it must not be regarded as a rite by which such a person becomes in the full sense a Christian. For this, baptism is entirely sufficient. The Christological aspect is seen in the following: "Baptism, in which by virtue of our union with Christ in His death and resurrection we are sealed with the Spirit". With baptism he links the Eucharist, "by which we are fed sacramentally on Christ and show forth the Lord's death till He come" (p.321). There we see the eschatological emphasis.

God's people, Lampe continues, are sealed as His own possession by baptism in which Christ incorporates them into

Himself by the gift of the Spirit. Lampe rejected as unscriptural the view advanced by Thornton, that the promise of the Spirit which the ascended Christ received from the Father is implemented only through Confirmation, a theory which implies that no unconfirmed person is a true Christian. In the New Testament the Seal is the stamp of the indwelling Spirit of God which is received by the convert who is justified by faith in Christ, and through baptism is sacramentally made a partaker of Him in His death and resurrection. The believer in baptism was enabled to partake symbolically in the Spirit's descent at Jordan and through the mediation of the Son of God to hear, as it were, the divine declaration of his own adoptive sonship (p.307).

Lampe separated himself from St. Thomas Aquinas when the latter defended the separate value of Confirmation (S.T.3.72.9.), and he quoted Jewel in support of his own view that baptism was Christ's own way of incorporating the believer. "Whosoever is baptized ... hath the full and perfit covenant and assurance of salvation: he is perfitly buried with Christ, doth perfitly put on Christ, and is perfitly made partaker of His resurrection".[13] Further, "baptized infants are the temple and tabernacles of the Holy Ghost",[14] and (citing Beveridge) "all that are baptized ... are said to be baptized into Christ. But they who are in Christ... must needs partake of the Spirit that is in Him, their Head".[15]

The Holy Spirit's indwelling has been mediated by virtue of the Christian's membership of Christ bestowed on him sacramentally by faith in baptism (p.316) We cannot distinguish the Spirit's operation ab extra from this personal indwelling. The Spirit is received by incorporation into Christ.[16] The convert to faith in Christ receives the indwelling presence of

the Holy Spirit by virtue of his participation, through faith responding to the grace of God in Christ, in the status of sonship to God and freedom of access to the Father, which is the gift of God the Son to redeemed humanity. This union with Christ and sharing in His sonship is symbolized and sacramentally effected by baptism which re-enacts the baptism of Jesus in which the Spirit descended on Him and He was proclaimed the Son of the Divine Father. That baptism pre-figured and symbolized the redemptive purpose of Christ's mission as the servant of Yehweh and was fulfilled in His death and resurrection. The indwelling presence of the Spirit is simply one aspect of the sharing of the Resurrection life of Christ; the believer is marked out as a member of Christ's Body (p.319).

The great event which changed John's baptism into Christian baptism was the baptism of Jesus, regarded first as the foreshadowing and symbolical summing up of His mission as son and servant of God, of His death, resurrection and ascension, and of the new covenant to be inaugurated in these events, and, secondly, as an event which pre-figured and made possible the Pentecostal fulfilment of the ancient hope of a universal outpouring of the Spirit upon the people of God (p.23). Though the Spirit descended upon Jesus and not upon the water, it was this descent of the Spirit on Him which turned a purificatory lustration into a sacrament of the Holy Spirit's approach to man, when the death and resurrection of the Christ had established the new covenant and the Spirit could be bestowed on all who responded in faith to His saving work (p.34). The descent of the Spirit was directly connected with the heavenly proclamation of the Lord's

divine Sonship. His possession of the Spirit fulfilled the traditional expectation of the Messiah, and its consequence was the declaration and realisation of His status as the Son of God. Sonship and Spirit = possession are, in effect, identical. This resting of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus is sharply distinguished by the evangelists from the "enthusiasm" of prophetic ecstacy. It is a state of personal union with the Father, a permanent condition. This state of being permanently "anointed" with the Spirit has its moments of high exaltation; it is not uniformly present in the same degree (cf. the cry of desolation on the cross). It is of a different quality from the temporary and partial Spirit-possession of a prophet. It is a continuous enduring endowment of Jesus with authority and power (p.35).

The heavenly voice which followed the Spirit's descent proclaimed Jesus as "my beloved son in whom I am well pleased". Lampe remarks that Mark's version strongly suggests that Jesus is designated God's Son in words which indicate that His Sonship and Messiahship are to be interpreted in terms of the role of the second Isaiah's servant of Yahweh (p.36). Lampe thinks it is not fanciful to see here a symbol of the servant's role as the bearer of "the sins of many". He is inclined to agree with Flemington's suggestion that the difficult saying of Matthew iii, 15, "for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" contains an allusion to Isaiah iii,2, "My righteous servant shall make many righteous and he shall bear their iniquities". This sacrificial motif is perfectly explicit in the fourth Gospel (p.38). Within the setting of this thought Jesus speaks

of His coming death as the cup which He has to drink and the baptism with which He has to be baptized. The former metaphor looks forward to the Last Supper - the cup of the blood of the covenant, the latter backward in the first instance to the baptism of John, but also forward to the Servant's atoning death in which the symbolism of that baptism finds its fulfilment. In the atoning work of Christ the Gospel sacraments of baptism and eucharist have their common ground and become the effective signs by which the servant baptism of Christ and His sacrifice of the new covenant are applied through faith to His followers, (p.39).

For Jesus Himself the Spirit baptism at Jordan was, in a sense, proleptic, anticipating His reception of the promise of the Holy Ghost when He had been exalted at the right hand of God (p.31). The description of Christ ascending from the water may possibly point forward to the ascension (cf. the Marcan reference (p.43).

There is an informative Summary of this aspect of Lampe's early Christology as seen in The Seal (p.44).

> Christ's own baptism with the Old Testament background of the Servant prophecies, the Messianic unction with the Spirit, and the new covenant summing up and symbolizing the new relationship between God and man established through His saving work, is the ground and origin of baptism as we find it practised in the Apostolic Church the sacrament of participation in the Spirit anointing of the Christ through the response made by faith to His work of reconcilation. When, therefore, the completion of that work made it possible after Pentecost for believers to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, the baptism by which they were made partakers of the Christ corresponded in many respects to that which the Lord Himself received. Baptism was still a symbol of repentance for remission of sins, but this aspect of it had, of course, no parallel in the case of Jesus, except insofar as a renunciation of Satan had taken place after his Baptism in the rejection of the temptations: but the rite had also acquired a positive significance. It was the medium of the bestowal upon those who were baptized into Jesus Christ of the Spirit which had rested upon Him.

Finally, Lampe observed an important point which he said had too often been neglected in theology: the baptism of Jesus was proleptic, signifying and summing up in a single action the entire mission and saving work of the Servant Messiah, which was to be revealed and unfolded gradually in the course of His life, death, resurrection and ascension. The baptism of His followers is also proleptic, signifying and summing up in a single moment all the consequences of their faith-union with Christ, which will be gradually unfolded in the course of their lives and fully realized only at the Parousia. Christian baptism is thus a re-presentation of the baptism of Jesus (p.45).

We can note that although his conviction that Christ had been raised did not alter Paul's belief that there would be a future life for the righteous, it changed the time-scale of his eschatology. Within the New Testament the hope of resurrection at the last day was beginning to give way to, or at least to co-exist with, the idea of eternal life as a present reality.

The Holy Spirit

In view of Lampe's later doctrine of the relation between Christ and the Holy Spirit, the particular importance of this section will be obvious. His early pneumatology was adumbrated over a period of seven years. As far as one can see from a careful examination of these writings there is no radical change in his belief about the Person and work of the Spirit. The dictionary articles are more or less summaries of previous writings: this is legitimate and to be expected. To avoid tedious and unnecessary repetition, yet at the same time without misrepresenting him in any degree, I propose to take his earliest

and latest articles in this period, viz. (i)"The Work of the Holy Spirit in History," and (ii) "The Paraclete", and to present the views expressed there as revealing his convictions about the third Person of the Holy Trinity.

(i) Can the Christian discern a moving of the Spirit in the sweep of human history? Yes, but it is not a plain observable fact even to the eye of the Christian historian. He discerns the Spirit's work by the eye of faith (p.126). Particularly, the Spirit is not to be thought of as an impersonal force. He is a person, He is God Himself, personal, living, revealed in Jesus Christ. The early Church took nearly three hundred years to clarify the belief that the Spirit is God indeed, of the same essence with the Father and the Son.

Lampe observed that the theology of grace, the Church, and the Sacraments, is vitiated by false notions of the Spirit as a "thing" or an "it", yet he goes on, "The Third Person is an eternal mode of being of the one God". From this we may conclude that "Person" and "mode of being" are alternative ways of describing the Spirit, but Lampe's basic presupposition is full acceptance of the personality of the Spirit as the Third Person of the Godhead. We must not confuse the Spirit with the principle of evolution - inevitable progress towards human betterment, or with the Zeitgeist, or with an immanent philosophical principle, Hegelian, or Marxist (p.197).

If we are believers in the Trinity we will conceive of the Spirit as operative in the whole course of God's sustaining guiding Providence from the beginning of creation. "The Spirit of God broods upon the face of watery chaos", reminding us of the continuous work of the Spirit in bringing life and order into

being and maintaining the divine order. "Nevertheless" says Lampe, "we do not associate God's providential government primarily with the Third Person" (p.199). That word "primarily" is interesting, suggesting, as it does, a kind of secondary role in this connection.

The peculiar "economy" of the Spirit, His special function, is to take of the things of Christ and reveal them to men. It is when Christ has dies, risen, ascended, that the Pentecostal descent of the Spirit comes. In the Christian dispensation, the Spirit is revealed as being the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In a true sense, though not, of course, literally, ontologically, the Spirit "was not" before Christ's glorification (p.200).

In all this, we may see that Lampe distinguishes between the secular historian's interpretation of history, and the Christian's, with his eye of faith. Hence the following is not without special interest. Lampe says that under the guidance of the Spirit, God's purpose was perceived in the whole history of the world. "The Babylonian conquest manifested the character of God" and was a necessary part of His dealings with His chosen people. Thus, through the guidance of the Spirit the setting was prepared for the "decisive act of God in Christ", for it was in history, viewed as "sacred history" that "Christ interpreted His mission, and His followers understood it" (p.200). We recall Lampe's words in "Early Patristic Eschatology": "Like the Hebrews redeemed from Egypt and preserved by the blood of the Paschal Lamb as the seal that marked them as God's possession, the new people of God have already been freed from bondage.."(p.23).

The action of the Spirit, says Lampe, may also be discerned

outside the Hebraic covenant, in the development of human needs and hopes which only Christ could satisfy. He says "in this sense we may find a secondary action of the Holy Spirit" in a work of preparation (p.201). Secondary, here, means secondary to the Spirit's main work of prophetic inspiration, and the building up of the Body of Christ. He stresses that the Church's Spirit is the personal Spirit of Christ. It is His work within the body to complete the task of creation after the image of God, "to raise humanity to its full stature in Christ" (p.201). We may ask at this point, was it in the light of these thoughts about the Spirit that Lampe began to be disturbed about the relation between Christ and the Spirit in the matter of God's creative, redemptive and sanctifying activity? How exactly do we relate a mode of God's being to a divine Person?

Lampe's last work on the Holy Spirit in this early period, is to be found, like the earliest, in The Interpreter's Dictionary of The Bible (p.654 f.). It is headed "Paraclete". The basic meaning of the word is "one called to the side of". Passively, there is the sense of standing to help; actively - of someone who pleads as an advocate (Jn. 2:1) for someone, and so convinces and convicts, and also one who, as a counsellor, exhorts, strengthens and comforts another. The term is applied to Jesus Christ in Jn. 2.1. indicating His function as the representative of His people, who intercedes for them with the Father. His function as Paraclete is identical with His high-priestly office as expounded by the letter to the Hebrews (cf especially Heb.7. 25-28).

Jesus promises "another paraclete". This is the Holy

Spirit whose function is thus said by implication to be identical with that of Christ, but who is yet distinguished from Him. He is fully personal (Jn.14: 25.16:13). The paraclete passages in the fourth Gospel mark the most highly developed thought in the New Testament in respect of the personality of the Holy Spirit of God. He is pre-eminently the revealer of Christ to believers. As the revealer of Christ He takes the place of the physical presence of Christ the Incarnate Word. Christ's presence through the medium of the Spirit is clearly associated with His return to His disciples in the post-resurrection appearances (14:18; 16:16; cf 20:22).

This connection of the Resurrection with the revelation of Christ through the Paraclete is fundamental to Johannine theology. The coming of the Spirit is dependent on the completion of Christ's saving work in His death and resurrection, and so it is spoken of in future terms. The removal of Christ's physical presence will enable His followers to receive through Him the Spirit, who was not present during the earthly ministry of the Lord (7:39).

For the fourth Gospel, as for Paul, the indwelling of the Spirit is the basic principle of life "in Christ". The union of Christ with the Father is to be extended to the believer through the return of Christ after His death by which are indicated both his post-resurrection appearances and His continuing presence through the medium of the Spirit (p.154). Through the Spirit Christians will have all that Christ said to them brought to their remembrance (14:26). It is from this standpoint that the fourth Gospel is written. The author believes that through the work of the Spirit in the Church it

is possible to know Christ more fully than He could be known by those who saw Him only in His earthly life. The Paraclete speaks of Christ: Christ is, in fact, the total content of the Paraclete's revelation to believers. Though He gives fresh understanding, however, the truth has already been revealed, for the truth is Christ (16: 13-15).

If we were to summarize his thoughts about the Holy Spirit the following would be representative: the Spirit is revealed in Jesus, and is of the same essence with both Father and Son. He is an eternal mode of being of the one God; the word "mode" may have a whiff of Sabellianism about it, and remind us of Lampe's essay on Marcellus, who was definitely Sabellian, but who was nevertheless not "dismissed" by Athanasius. While it remains true that at this stage Lampe's basic presupposition was a full acceptance of the personality of the Spirit as the Third Person of The Godhead, it is not always easy for the modern mind to equate a "mode of being" with a fully personal divine being who is one of three.

Not everyone would agree with his firm exclusion of the Spirit from certain secular movements such as we have mentioned. The political, social, aspects of such movements, so far as their mechanics are concerned, might well cloak an idealism which it would be difficult to separate completely from the movement of the Holy Spirit.

While he holds that the Spirit operates in the whole course of God's sustaining Providence from the beginning, he nevertheless does not associate that government primarily with the Spirit. We have already noted that the word "primarily"

prompts us to pause. Does the Spirit have only a secondary part to play here, and which of the Persons plays the primary part? He gives a kind of an answer when he repeats that the primary function of the Spirit is to reveal Christ to men. He leaves us wondering about the function of the Logos at this point in relation to the government of the universe. It reminds us of Temple's own early quandary about the cosmological functions of the Logos while Jesus was a babe at Bethlehem.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ Himself. His function is identical with that of Christ. He takes the place of the physical presence of Christ, during whose earthly ministry He was not present. If function proceeds from essence, and if the functions of Christ and Spirit are identical, it is difficult to speak of the Spirit's "absence" at any time. Moreover, Lampe says nothing about the text, "flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17). Functions and Persons seem to get confused!

There is the continuing presence of Christ with His disciples through the medium of the Spirit; Christ is one with them with the kind of union that exists between Him and the Father. Thus, though it is now possible through the Spirit to know Christ more fully than He could be known by those who saw Him only in His earthly life, this fresh understanding does not alter the basic truth which is Christ the fulness of God.

Conclusion

Speaking of the communities for whom the Evangelists were writing, Lampe asks:

> ....what influences, cultural, social, religious, moulded their thought? Why did they interpret Jesus in the way they did? It is not easy to answer that because the external evidence about those early circumstances, communities, is extremely scanty. The good news could never be a factual record of the life, work, teaching of the historical character, Jesus, for the heart of the good news was the Resurrection. Jesus was the risen glorified and present Lord, known through His Spirit. 17.

These words summarize conveniently enough the position to which Lampe had moved in the years 1948 to 1965. What is of particular importance is the emphasis on the authority of the experience of the resurrection, bestowed by the Holy Spirit. The full truth about Jesus the Lord could not have been known by those who were only with Him in Galilee. They did not share in the experience of the post-resurrection Church. The standpoint from which the fourth Gospel was written explicitly claims to have been that of the post-resurrection faith. The same is true of the other evangelists. "Their books were written from within a new dimension, viz., the Resurrection, and written in the conviction that their subject is a living person" (p.54). If we take this Resurrection dimension seriously we find ourselves faced with many difficulties: it is never possible completely to separate out any factual record from the interpretation put upon it. The early Christians believed that in Jesus the whole history of God's dealings with Israel had reached its climax (p.54).

Lampe asks "Did they start with accurate knowledge about some episode in his life and then discover a prophecy or foreshadowing of it in the Old Testament? Did they then mould the story of the episode to fit the prophecy more exactly?" (p.55). Matthew seems to have built up his stories (the Infancy narratives)

about certain key passages in the Old Testament which he applied to Jesus, irrespective of their original meaning. The story of the feeding of the multitude spoke about the communion with Jesus which they experienced in the Eucharist, of the bread from Heaven that gave them new life. John tells the story of the water being changed into wine (p.59). Here, Lampe believes a meditation or sermon has been cast in the form of a story (Jn. 2.1-11). This difficulty is most acute in the case of the Resurrection stories. With all of them they are evidently motivated to a large extent by the Church's needs for preaching, teaching, and controversies with opponents.

Lampe reminds his readers "I have stressed the reading back of the post-resurrection faith into the story of Jesus... but all the pictures cohere: they add up to a consistent presentation of an overall picture which is very convincing. All this means we cannot simply read off Christian doctrine or ethics from the recorded words of Jesus" (p.60). Again, "what matters most for us is whether the Gospels show us convincingly someone whom we have to acknowledge as God, ... whether or not Jesus claimed all these titles for Himself ... whether His followers were right in applying them to Him: you have to reflect on the implications of the total picture of Jesus as one who personally embodied God's sovereign love" (p.62).

If we tried to summarize these few, though vitally important, remarks of Lampe, we might say that the key is his emphasis on experience. We have seen his stress on this previously. What he says rocks the foundations of all fundamentalism and puts him still one further remove from his

early Evangelicalism. In effect, it is a neat summary of the impact of biblical and historical criticism on Christians who would seek to understand the origin and nature of the Church's indispensable title deeds.

The chapter has shown how his critical attitude developed towards traditional exegesis and interpretation of the Bible, relating it to reason and to authority, showing how it ought to be read like any other book, the author's original meaning, the social, cultural, religious conditions of the time to be taken into consideration. Typology and allegory must never be confused, and neither of these must be stretched beyond reasonable limits of application for the sake of trying to find Jesus, e.g. in the Old Testament. The creeds and formularies of the Church are not to be seen as immune from criticism. Infallability is a word to be avoided. Proleptic is a favourite term of Lampe's: it has to be accepted that not a little of the New Testament is a reading back into the earthly life of Jesus the Church's post-resurrection experience of the risen Lord who is a living Presence. Such "reading back" is mostly presented in terms of concrete historical narrative.

Special stress is placed by Lampe on the Person and work of the Spirit. At times this raises questions in the mind, e.g. sometimes he refers to the Spirit in terms of "he" and insists on his separate personality; at others he speaks of Him as "a mode of being" of God, and there are times when he seems almost to intimate an interchangeability of function between Jesus and the Spirit.

As regards Jesus' Messiahship, he prefers the term preordained rather than pre-existed, yet indicates that Christ

is to be regarded as the agent of creation. Sacraments are not "things" to be "used", but are God - ordained means of grace, whereby salvation is mediated to us. Eschatology may be "translated" in the light of a developing pneumatology. Modern anthropology makes impossible any doctrine of original righteousness, while the doctrines of the Fall, of the Virgin Birth, the stories of the Transfiguration, of the empty tomb, of the Ascension, all require re-interpretation on various grounds. Within the vast question of evil, the idea of a personal devil need no longer be retained. This whole chapter is nothing less than an attempt to identify the particular roots of Lampe's earlier thinking that led ultimately to his later Christological radicalism.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. The event will be found succinctly outlined in the Memoir (see footnote 1 to Ch.1), Ch.1.

2. Journal of Theological Studies, 49, 1948, pp.58-73. The bibliography published in Explorations in Theology 8, G.W.H. Lampe (S.C.M.Press, 1981) contains a slip on Lampe's part, the substitution of βάπτισμα for ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑ.

3. J.T.S, 49, 1948, pp.169-75.

4. "Early Patristic Eschatology" by G.W.H. Lampe, in W. Manson (et al.), Eschatology (Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers, 2) (Oliver and Boyd,1953) pp. 17 - 35.

5. For the reformulation of eschatology in terms of pneumatology see G.W.H. Lampe God as Spirit (O.U.P., 1977), p.161. The Resurrection was previously an object of distant hope. In Jesus the end had already come. Within the New Testament the hope of resurrection at the last day was beginning to give way to, or at least co-exist with, the idea of eternal life as a present reality.

6. Essays in Typology (with K.J. Woollcombe), Studies in Biblical Theology 22 (S.C.M. Press, 1957).

7. L.Q.R. 183, 1958, pp.109-16.

8. L.Q.R. 190, 1965, pp.17 -25.

9. Published in R.R. Williams (ed), Authority and the Church (S.P.C.K., 1965), pp. 3-19.

10. "Authority in Bible, Church and Reason", L.Q.R. 183, 1948, pp. 252-6. This quotation on p.253.

11. In D.E. Nineham (ed), The Church's Use of the Bible (S.P.C.K., 1963), pp.125-144.

12. "Miracles in the Acts of the Apostles" and "Miracles and Early Christian Apologetic" in C.F.D. Moule, Miracles (Mowbray, 1965), pp.165-78 and 203-18.

13. "A Treatise of the Sacraments", Works, Parker Society, Vol.2, p.1126, cited by Lampe on p.311.

14. ibid, p.1128, cited on p.312.

15. Sermon 35 in Works, Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology, Vol.2, p.183, cited by Lampe on p.312.

16. Here Lampe refers to W. Bright's trenchant criticism of the thesis of Puller and Mason which denied to the baptized a fully personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. See Morality in Doctrine, sermon 8, "Divine Sealing", (London, 1892), p.91. Cited by Lampe on p.317.

17. G.W.H. Lampe, "What does it all add up to?", in C.F. Evans (ed), The New Testament Gospels, (B.B.C., 1965), pp.51-62.

CHAPTER THREE

The Turning Point and its Causes

Introduction

The reason why this Chapter will concentrate on Lampe's sermon and Statement in The Resurrection, is they show clearly how his mind had been working in the area of the application of biblical and historical criticism to traditional doctrine. Here it is specific and detailed. Hitherto his movement away from orthodoxy had been incidental as within other contexts. Here it is sole and concentrated. It is a complete and final rejection of a central traditional doctrine of the Church, viz., the empty tomb, which he refers to as a religious myth (The Resurrection p.17). This small book is at once the gathering into one compact compass of the results of the pressure of the "signals" or "anticipations" that had gone before. It was the great turning-point in his writings, a kind of burning of his boats, theologically, so far as many, including clergy, were concerned.[1] There could now be no turning back: it was forward now to the mature theology that climaxed in the 1976 Bamptons. What might have happened afterwards, had he lived another ten years must remain unknown. None can doubt that he still had much to give. His death was a tragedy for the Church, and we are left with God as Spirit as a fitting memorial to his scholarship and his Christology.

The Resurrection

We ought to keep in mind a not unimportant distinction between causes and reasons. In Lampe's case, the principle cause of the change was his intellectual and spiritual integrity,

i.e. the determination to follow wherever conscience pointed, to abide by conviction grown out of experience, as he would have put it. We have already noticed the stress that he laid upon the importance of experience. The reasons that contributed towards this new direction of conviction could be included under the heading "biblical and historical criticism". At first sight there may seem to be an abrupt, perhaps even shocking, break between his earlier Christology as recorded in his writings during the period we have looked at, and the year 1965; yet within those writings, as we have seen, there peeped out occasionally, but with increasing frequency and assurance, expressions which, taken together, provide some evidence for believing that alongside any presentation of orthodox Christology there was an underground movement, intellectual and spiritual, in the direction of his later position. This is seen most clearly when we extract some of those expressions, and put them together "in a lump", as it were, alongside his more orthodox ones. Theologically, they must have been increasingly uncomfortable bed-fellows. They can scarcely leave us in much doubt that while he may still have appeared to some to observe a fair Evangelical Christology, his mind must have been continually rubbing up against points of critical import regarding Scripture, the Fathers, history and authority, points which, in the end, left him with little alternative but to move on, in all honesty, to his later position. That move was first made publicly, and as it turned out, explosively, when he preached his sermon on the Resurrection in St. Martin's Parish Church, Birmingham, on Easter Day, April 18th, 1965, and followed it by a broadcast discussion on the issues raised. A dialogue arising from

broadcasts by Lampe and D.M. MacKinnon was published by Mowbrays (ed. William Purcell) in 1966 entitled The Resurrection.

The interesting question is why Lampe chose the doctrine of the Resurrection as his theological "flash point". We have remarked how easy it would be to put alongside each other his orthodoxy and the pointers away from it. The contrast would relate to biblical and historical criticism, and, arising therefrom, to creeds and ancient formularies, to the difficulties of traditional philosophical terminology, to the doctrine of God, the relation between the divine Persons, especially between Christ and the Spirit, sometimes the apparent interchangeability, or at least the apparent identity, of their functions, the authentic humanity of Christ, His ignorance, the bearing of modern anthropology on doctrines of Creation, original righteousness, the Fall with its consequences (e.g. corruption and death), the infancy narratives, and so on. The list of contrasts would be interesting, but partly they have been touched upon already, and they will appear more strongly as we move on in the subsequent chapters. Our immediate task is to look in fairly close detail at the arguments which he held to be supportive of his much publicised departure from that integral part of the doctrine of the Resurrection, the doctrine of the empty tomb. The reasons for his change were both historical and religious.

He began with the story of the impact of the living Christ on Paul and other Christians. "For Paul and all those others before him, Jesus became a living reality, and for ever after, that was the one thing that really mattered to them" (p.8). Paul did not "see" Jesus as we see each other, nor could Christ's

voice have been tape-recorded. It was all a revelation. But then Lampe went on, "Forget the picture of a body holding a flag of triumph, stepping out of the grave. That suggests a corpse come back to life on this physical plane. If that were what the idea of Christ's Resurrection means, then it were better forgotten. Such a Christ is dead. He remains buried. The real Christ is not a revived corpse". Lampe continued: "Christ lives in the fulness of God's life ... He lives for us and in us" (p.8). But,

> that Friday was the end. God had turned away. Jesus died with the cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?", the only time that Jesus did not call God "Father". God had let Him down. Jesus was dead. The light of the world was quenched. Until Easter morning. Suddenly, against all expectation, some of his friends had that same experience that later came to Paul. Jesus encountered them. He was now their living Lord. God had said "Yes" to Jesus (p.10).

Lampe declared that Easter speaks about God. It is not a story of a return of a dead person to this life. It has nothing to do, either, with the idea that there is some part of our being that is inherently immortal, some entity that we might call a soul. As far as our human nature is concerned, "when you're dead, you're dead: and so was Jesus" (p.10). That phrase must have shocked thousands.

For Lampe, the Easter experience tells us that faith in God won't let us down. God has said the last word about it, and that word is "yes". God is the God of love, love that will not let us go, even through death. Here, if we follow Jesus, the living Lord, lies our hope of reaching that perfect relationship with God, which, because God is unchanging, we call eternal life. "Not this kind of existence going on and

on , but life transformed by faith and love so as to become life of a different quality" (p.10).

That Jesus is the living Lord cannot, of course, be demonstrated to be true like a scientific proposition: "personal relationship is not susceptible of objective proof" (p.11). For His enemies, Jesus was still dead. We can only have the assurance of experience. "Those books were written because Jesus was known to be the living Lord: otherwise no Christian would have put pen to paper", (and there is) "the experience of ourselves, which we are going to renew today as we meet at the Lord's table, to take bread and wine in remembrance of Him and find that He comes alive again for us and in us. This is assurance enough" (p.11). There follow some extremely important words that reveal Lampe's belief about the Resurrection. "The truth is, Christ was raised to life ... The first and last word is God's Word, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our risen Lord" (p.12). There, too, at this crucial stage in his thinking, is his firmly stated belief in the Incarnation.

In his Easter Statement (pp.29-60) it is quite clear that Lampe did not regard subjectivity or personal visions as destructive in any way of the reality or objectivity of what is experienced. A typical sentence of his in this respect is "I do not think that the subjectivity of "vision" and "hearing" renders the Easter appearances inadequate as an assurance that God truly raised Jesus, and that He won the decisive triumph over death" (p.39). In passing we can note that word decisive, and recall Mascall's criticism of Lampe as one who, while referring to Christ's Person and work as unique, rejected the notion of salvation as depending on a decisive

act of God in history.[2] A similar passing notice may be accorded to his remark" ... it is only to the eye of faith that certain historical events may reveal the operation of God's saving purposes. Faith alone can discern a mighty act of God in the Exodus from Egypt" (p.32). Any sensible reader will know what is really meant when it is said that faith turns an event into an act of God. It is far from saying, or intending to imply, that we actually make acts of God.[3]

It is not long before we meet with the plain admission by Lampe, "I regard the story of the empty tomb as myth rather than as literal history, but profoundly significant as myth".[4] He strongly denies any parallel between the Resurrection of Jesus and the raising of Lazarus. "The latter does not do for us what the former has done" (p.40).

He proceeds to give a series of reasons why he does not take the story of the empty tomb as factual history, but as an attempt to express the implications of the Easter appearances in terms of a myth. The earliest account includes Paul's first hand testimony of his encounter on the Damascus road. This account comprises Paul's recitation of similar appearances to others before him. Old Testament texts (e.g. Hosea 6.2, and possibly Jonah 1.17) probably caught the eye and were regarded as prophetic only because it was already known that Jesus was already encountered on the third day after His death (p.41). The prophecies were probably adduced to support this testimony rather than vice versa. It is an important fact that this very early account of Easter makes no mention of the tomb being found empty. Paul's account does not suggest that he thought of it in terms of a bodily manifestation. The account in Acts

indicates clearly that Luke believed it was not. These earliest testimonies thus stand in contrast to the Easter stories in the Gospels. They indicate that the Easter message that Christ had been raised from the dead was originally based historically on a series of appearances rather than on a discovery that His tomb was empty (p.42). Again, in the case of Paul, the argument from his silence about the tomb has further unusual force, for the situation in which he wrote I Corinthians was that some of them were denying that there was a resurrection of the dead. (I Corinthians 15.12). Had Paul known that the tomb was empty it seems inconceivable that he should not have adduced this as a telling piece of objective evidence (p.43). Lampe also draws attention to Paul's assurance that Christ's people will also be raised, and that their resurrection will not be different in kind from His. This is largely the point of his attempt to answer the question "How are the dead raised?" (I Corinthians 15.25 ff). Paul was not content simply to reproduce the traditional imagery of Jewish Apocalyptic, though at one time he seemed to have thought of the future resurrection in that way, characteristic of his own Pharisaic Judaism (cf. I.Thessalonians 4.14).

In his description of the sowing of the grain and its connection with the corn that grows, Paul is saying that, on the one hand there is some kind of real though indefinable continuity between our present bodily mode of existence and the life beyond death, and on the other, that there is discontinuity also (p.44). He sees an analogy in the relation between the grain that is sown, and the corn that grows up. The seed suffers dissolution, the corn has a different kind of body from the seed, yet although

corn and seed are different, there is an organic connection between the two. So it is with the dead. The body which is put in the grave is not raised as a physical body. "Flesh and blood can never possess the Kingdom of God, and the perishable cannot possess immortality" (I Corinthians 15.50).

Lampe comments accordingly:

> In the light of this profound and difficult thought about the resurrection of believers, and bearing in mind that he believed Christ to have been the pioneer or "first-fruits" of those who will be raised like him, I find it difficult to think that Paul could possibly have believed that Jesus rose from the grave as, or in, a physical body (p.46).

Keeping close to the New Testament record, he continues..."if the body of the risen Christ could be handled, and if He truly ate food, then this is untrue: flesh and blood manifestly did possess the Kingdom of God" (p.46). Lampe thinks that we can be reasonably sure that those Resurrection stories which speak of a fully corporeal presence of Jesus after His death could not have been known to Paul. "It thus seems to me probable" he says, "that the earliest stratum of the Easter tradition did not make the Gospel depend upon an empty tomb" (p.46).

Lampe made the further points that in the Easter stories in the four gospels there are, as in the infancy narratives, the characteristics of myth - angels, tangible body, etc.

> Much of the material is obviously a casting back, in the form of narrative about Jesus, of the thought and experience of the Church in later years, and of its controversies with opponents. The narratives in the various gospels are remarkably inconsistent with each other. They are all clearly independent of the very early tradition recorded by Paul, and in some respects very difficult to reconcile with it (p.47).

He gives a brief summary of the stories in the first three gospels, and concludes that an analysis of the Synoptic narratives of Easter suggests that while they are full of profound

theological reflection about the experience of the Risen Lord (especially the Emmaus story) they are of much less historical value than the tradition recorded by Paul. They suggest that the disciples were not concerned about the tomb at all as they preached the Resurrection. Attention is concentrated rather on the appearances of Jesus (p.52). Moreover, there seems no reason to suppose that a re-creation of the "self" in a different dimension of existence should involve the abolition of the material flesh and blood (p.53). To suppose that the body of Jesus was "dematerialized" in the grave, but from time to time "rematerialized" seems altogether pointless. More important, this would do away with that correspondence of the Lord's Resurrection with our own which was fundamental to Paul's argument about future life and is vitally important for our own belief about it (p.54).

To the above must be added the question - if the Resurrection were to be conceived of in a material way, what happened to the risen body of flesh and bones in the end? Luke says it went up spatially into heaven. Lampe comments:

> For us that reply is impossible. As early as Origen in the third century it was being pointed out that we must not think of the Ascension as a movement in space. Luke seems to have translated into mythical form the universal belief of the early Church that Jesus had ascended to the throne of God, in the sense that He had been exalted over all the world (p.54).

As regards the fourth Gospel Lampe states that in his view it offers a most profound and moving meditation of the traditions used by the Synoptists in the light of the experience of Christian believers who truly encountered the Risen Lord in the worship and witness of the Church (p.55). The story of Thomas is especially significant. Without touching Jesus, as

he had wished, he confesses Him as "my Lord and my God". In answer, Jesus declares that faith is not to be dependent upon sight (p.56).[5]

> So it is that the fourth Gospel, while offering us on the surface a materialistic presentation of the Resurrection, leads us through it to a deeper interpretation related to the Church's continuous experience of the Risen Lord. The Christian experience of meeting the Lord at the Eucharist is reflected back in the story of the meal by the lakeside. It leads up to the story of Peter's rehabilitation and commissioning, a foreshadowing of his death, which happened, of course, a long time before this gospel was written (p.57).

Lampe concluded the historical reasons why he told a questioner that he did not himself accept the story of the empty tomb, by answering the question why, if the empty tomb was not an original or essential part of the Easter message, it came to take so prominent a place in the story? He said that it was "very natural". Once Christians began to reflect on the original proclamation that God had raised Jesus, and that He was seen by many witnesses, they would naturally picture the event of His raising in terms of an empty grave. This was part of the thinking of men accustomed to the beliefs of Pharisaic Judaism about the future life. Also, the natural inclination to picture it in this way would be stimulated by the reflection on the Scriptures, e.g. the prophecy in Psalm 16.10, "Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy One to see corruption", was a powerful weapon in the armoury of Christian apologetic, and would suggest the Resurrection ought to be conceived in terms of a physical raising of the body (p.58).

Lampe found these historical reasons "compelling", but admitted that they would not be seen as conclusive by other

students of the New Testament. Many possibilities of other interpretations remained open. His fundamental reason for basing his Easter sermon on the appearances of Jesus, and not on the empty tomb was not historical but religious. "Sight, or objective proof is not the proper ground of faith, and Christ's Resurrection is the assurance that we, too, shall rise from the dead. This seems to imply that His Resurrection was not different in kind from what we may hope for through Him" (p.58).

In conclusion, he links up the doctrine of the Resurrection with that of the Incarnation, which at this stage he had not come to question:[6]

> The truth of the Incarnation is that the Son of God became fully man. He entered into our human condition and experienced all that belongs to our human nature, without sin, which is a perversion of our nature (but not, of course, without temptation, which does belong to it). Yet, if His body was raised physically from the grave, and did not see corruption, or if His body was transformed after death, into something different, in such a way that in itself it was annihilated, then He did not experience the whole of our human destiny. His entry into life beyond the grave was different from what we hope may be our own. For it is demonstrable that our bodies of flesh and blood will be dissolved, and that in whatever mode of existence we may be raised from death it will not be by either the resuscitation of this mortal body or its transformation - unless we follow the speculation of some of the Fathers concerning the reassembling by God, of the dispersed molecules of the flesh which I am not inclined to do (p.59).

Lampe quoted Baxter's well-known hymn:

> Christ leads me through no darker rooms
> Than He went through before:
> He that into God's Kingdom comes
> Must enter by this door.

and observed that if the story of the empty tomb were true, Christ's door into God's Kingdom would not be ours. "We should be confronted by another door through which He has

never entered, into a dark room which His Incarnate presence has never lightened" (p.59).

We could summarize Lampe's Sermon and Statement on Christ's Resurrection as follows:

i. There is nothing inherent in our own nature (such as a soul, or anything else) which provides us with a built-in guarantee of immortality. God's unchanging love is the principle of our immortality. It is our relationship with Him that is crucial (pp.10,60). ii. As far as our human nature is concerned, when you're dead, you're dead; and so was Jesus (p.10). iii. The Resurrection of Jesus was not like the raising of Lazarus - the resuscitation of a corpse. iv. The Redeemer is Lord of history and of nature; here Lampe agrees with D.M. MacKinnon (p.89). v. Lampe still believes in the Incarnation. The Word of God was truly made man. That is the heart of the Gospel. Jesus is the very embodiment of God's Word (p.92). vii. Jesus was not just a case of a good man setting us an example. By Him humanity was taken into a new unity with God (p.93). viii. Jesus was man as God intended him to be. He was the perfection of humanity. In Him self-centredness was overcome. He was the second Adam (p.93). ix. The wholly impenitent are set free, accepted, recreated through Christ. God's love is invincible (pp.100,101). x. Jesus was yet a first century man who was largely determined by the circumstances of the age in which He lived (p.96). xi. Our resurrection cannot be different in kind from His (p.97). xii. Christ's death is opus operatum. The agent of the Atonement is not just a good man but God Incarnate. Christ

achieved something new, and established a new foundation for the relations of men and women to God (p.99). xiii. The act of God in Christ on the cross is the most sublime presentation of that eternal attitude.[7] It is the focal point where it comes to a decisive and unique expression in the act of the Incarnate Son (p.100). xiv. Without the appearances, the empty tomb is not significant (p.102). xv. The reality of the presence of the living Lord needs no external confirmation by the story of the empty tomb. The story is a religious myth (p.102). xvi. Nothing but faith can attest the truth of the Resurrection. To look for some confirmation of its truth, independent of faith, would be (as both Lampe and MacKinnon agree) "to seek for a sign which shall not be given" (p.103).

The doctrine of the Resurrection and its connection with the story of the empty tomb has been selected, not only to illustrate the placing of the latter by Lampe firmly in the category of religious myth, but also to illustrate his arguments as a New Testament scholar, and as a disciple of Christ. As he says, there are other views about the story. What we have particularly drawn attention to concerning his Christology is that it is a mistaken, even though, perhaps natural, reaction on the part of many ordinary Christians to think that it needed nothing further than such a public detailed rejection of the story to certify Lampe as a disbeliever in the central doctrine of the Incarnation. A feature of his sermon and statement that stands out quite plainly, and to which we have tried to draw attention, is that, at this stage, marking as it may, a public signal of coming further change (yet, surely, only a coming to the surface of what had been going on

underneath for quite a time), Lampe was nevertheless still a firm believer in the Incarnation. For him, the Word, the Son, is the full embodiment of God: He is fully man, one of us, one of our kind.

It might well be asked by a reader of the foregoing - if Lampe still believed in the Incarnation, how can we say there is a change in his Christology? There may be a change in his thinking about the Resurrection, and in particular about its relation to the story of the empty tomb which he rejects, but he still believes the essentials of the doctrine of the Incarnation. All that has been written so far is thus scarcely relevant to our topic. What we should have done is point to the actual evidence of change in his Christology.

To this it must be replied that the story of the empty tomb, so emphatically rejected by Lampe on historical and religious grounds as a religious myth, was, and still is officially an integral, credal, part of the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection, and the latter is integral to the doctrine of the Incarnation. To tear the story away from the former, to excise it from the creed, cannot fail to produce repercussions on the orthodox understanding of the Incarnation. We cannot doubt his integrity in the sphere of scholarship, of his sincerity in that of devotion. The record of his agonizing is testimony to both. Canon W. Purcell comments: "It was from among the body of the clergy that the great majority of critics came. The main thrust of these criticisms was that Lampe seemed to have questioned the historical basis of the Resurrection narrative. It added to the enormity of it in his critics' views that he had done so on Easter Day itself".

Canon Purcell, who arranged the broadcast and was present throughout, denied that this was true and went on to say "only one moment ... gave some cause for disquiet and that was when he used the word myth in its theological sense ... it is only too readily in the public mind associated with the word mythical". After saying that many were helped, others were severely critical, that the shock-waves continued for some time, and that Lampe received nearly 1000 letters, Canon Purcell added this remark : "It may perhaps finally be said about this whole episode that it seems extraordinary now, after all these years afterwards, that what was said should have appeared to so many to be so much more radical than it was" (p.11). Nevertheless, no one can deny that it was a radical departure, in a particularly impressive setting at a particularly impressive moment, from what the Church has enshrined in her creed, and taught her children for hundreds of years. It can, therefore, not inappropriately be referred to as the public beginning of that "shift" which ended in the 1976 Bampton lectures, God as Spirit.

Lampe and MacKinnon

We conclude this chapter on Lampe's understanding of the Resurrection, with reference to D.M. MacKinnon's disagreements and criticisms and to some of Lampe's replies. Not all of the criticism did Lampe understand. For example when MacKinnon urged that "Not only the prince of this world, but the Father also, came to sift him in the hour of his Passion" (p.65). Lampe asked for further explanation (p.91). Some of MacKinnon's questions related to Lampe's interpretation

of atonement. Thus: "If I have to ask wherein I still differ from Professor Lampe, it touches the question of the unique and creative quality of Christ's work. Christ's sacrifice of certain earthly things, e.g. marriage, was due to the self-imposed limitations regarding his chosen work" (p.75). And, "What I dare to query in Professor Lampe's argument is a bias in the direction of exemplarism" (p.76). Or again, "In what sense do we regard the cross as an opus operatum, or are we compelled to say that all we find here is the most sublime presentation in time of the eternal readiness of God to receive to himself the truly penitent?" (p.77). In MacKinnon's Meditation of 1953 (also published in the book) it was to the former view that he was committed, but now he would try to say part of what he said then in a very different way (p.77). MacKinnon urges that the problems concerned with the understanding of the Resurrection do not simply concern the relative lateness of the emergence of the empty tomb tradition (Lampe's historical argument), rather "they concern much more Christ's approach to his Passion" (p.76). Nonetheless MacKinnon confessed that he gave more weight than Lampe to the fact of the inability of the opponents of the early preaching to silence the message of the Resurrection once and for all by producing the remains (p.84). "If we suppose something done here once and for all, we will not be surprised to find an element of the unique" (p.84). Finally, MacKinnon draws attention to what he presumes Lampe may have missed, namely the obscurities attending the use of the notion of dependence. "How does that for which we hope depend on Christ's vindication in the Resurrection?" (p.84).

In his Rejoinder (pp.89-103), Lampe says plainly that in

the Resurrection, revelation makes its ultimate claim that the Redeemer is Lord at once of history and of nature. In the presence of Christ's resurrection we are in the presence of the final things of God: its claims remain to ultimacy and finality (p.89). Lampe would hesitate to adopt the idea that the Passion was a kind of judgement through which Christ passed and in which he was acquitted. This might be misconstrued so as to obscure certain truths which he, Lampe, believed to be vital, for example that the Passion is the moment at which that completeness with the Father is manifested, that it is at that moment above all that Jesus discloses to us God himself in action, that the judgement passed on Jesus and the testimony brought to bear on him are a judgement and a testimony exercised, with the permissive will of God, by evil men and that the judgement pronounced at Calvary is that which Christ's accepting love passes upon those men and upon ourselves as sharers in their sinfulness (p.91).

It is important that we notice here (p.92) that, at this stage in his development, whatever he said later, Lampe states his unqualified belief in the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation. "The Word of God was truly made man is the heart of the gospel. God Incarnate entered into our condition" (p.92). With regard to his limitations, his range of experience was restricted by the kind of man he was, a first century Jew, a carpenter. This in itself raises difficulties if he is held up only as an example. Lampe says again that the significance of the Incarnation is not that the life of Jesus constitutes an example. It is rather that humanity has been taken up into unity with God (p.92).[8]

So Lampe rejects the charge of merely unqualified exemplarism.

In Jesus the inward-looking self-centredness of the first Adam is overcome. It is replaced by the total self-surrender of the second Adam. All the experiences that necessarily befall the lot of man must have been shared by him. We are not called to reproduce the externals of Jesus' life, but to "live in the spirit of Jesus" (p.94).[9] He must have shared our birth. He must have experienced death and corruption (p.97). MacKinnon stresses that we must not consider Christ's Resurrection in isolation, but, as we have seen, in the closest relation to the nature and purpose of his Passion (p.99). To the question, are we to regard the Cross as an opus operatum, or as the most sublime presentation in time of the eternal readiness of God to receive to himself the truly penitent, Lampe answers the first part of the question with an unhesitating Yes. Here we have a decisive act of God in history. It changed the relation of man to God for all time. Men rejected God in Christ. God in Christ accepted men (p.99).

Lampe preferred to avoid the term 'objective' in speaking of the Atonement because of the difficulties attached to it. He mentioned ancient, now untenable, theories of the Atonement. "Faith can, in fact, attest the truth of the Resurrection" (p.103). He concluded the act of God in Christ on the cross was both a decisive act in time which transformed man's relation to God, and also the most sublime presentation in time of the eternal readiness of God to receive to himself the truly penitent. Lampe thus attached himself to both an opus operatum view and an exemplarist view.

MacKinnon, in his chapter Further Reflections (p.107-112), concludes the dialogue by briefly indicating the philosophical

presuppositions which affected his thinking on these issues. (vi) "I shall try to indicate where and why I still venture to differ from him" (p.107). A.N. Whitehead spoke of Christianity as "a religion permanently in search of a metaphysic, but never able to rest in one" (p.107). MacKinnon commented that one of the senses of this remark had a bearing on the issues on which he touched, when he suggested in his earlier comments on their material that there was a need to thrash out the significance of the notion of dependence in its theological employment (p.108). (vii) His own bias was in the direction of realism as opposed to idealism, to Aristotelianism as opposed to Platonism, and consequently he was hostile to views which seemed to him to move in the direction of saying that faith creates its own object. While he denied accusing Lampe of adopting such a position, he added "I must admit that my readiness to use objectivist language more freely than he does may have its roots (at least in part) in an eagerness, in questions of general epistemology, to endorse the views of those who emphasize the element of discovery in coming to know, and the authority of brute fact in the refutation of hypotheses" (p.111).

He admitted frankly, over against his criticism of Lampe, that he tended to over-emphasize the extent to which faith must be construed as following after, or corresponding with, something antecedently given, and to under-emphasize the extent to which it is a constituent moment in a whole purpose that is, in the last resort, incomplete without it. He confessed he had to reckon with the degree to which his theological thought might be vitiated by a readiness to conceive or to represent the work of

atonement in ways that depreciated the extent to which it necessarily included within it personal response on the part of those who were recipients of its benefits.

He concluded that these considerations were relevant to the difference between Lampe and himself where the empty tomb was concerned. It was because he sought after facts that he looked for a publicly observable state of affairs in the spatial and temporal world, pointing towards that which was, in his view, necessarily unique and creative. "I conclude these last remarks by saying that what I now find I want most to do is to clarify a little the notion of dependence as we employ it in these contexts" (p.112). It was a notion that plunged one into the ethical intimacies of soteriology and the abstract styles of the philosophy of logic.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. See A Memoir, p.11.

2. See Whatever happened to the Human Mind? (S.P.C.K., 1980) p.103. Lampe did describe God's act in Christ as decisive (see God as Spirit, pp.112, 113.

3. ibid. p.102. Lampe does not imply we actually "make acts of God".

4. The Resurrection. A Dialogue with D.M. MacKinnon (Mowbray, 1966). p.40.

5. One of Lampe's insistent points, viz. faith is not to be dependent on sight, touch, but on the Father's loving relationship with us. Here, too, is the two-storied understanding of the fourth gospel (cf. J.A.T.Robinson, The Human Face of God (S.C.M., 1973) p.177).

6. It should be noted in the quotation that Lampe's insistence that corruption may be said to be part of our human lot qualifies his adherence to the doctrine of the incarnation.

7. The opus operatum doctrine of the Atonement is declared, yet not separated altogether from exemplarism (cf. his discussion with D.M. MacKinnon, The Resurrection, pp.90-111). Lampe regarded them as not mutually inconsistent. See also notes 8 and 9.

8. "Humanity taken up into God". This surely, can only refer to complete filial obedience, not to "a man becoming God" (cf. J.G. Dunn, Christology in the Making (S.C.M., 1980). In speaking of the inward looking self-centredness of the first Adam being replaced by the total self surrender of the second Adam, it is worth recalling St.Thomas Aquinas' words, "Malum quod in defectu actionis consistit, semper causatur ex defectu agentis". (quoted by O.C.Quick, The Gospel of the New World (Nisbet, 1944) p.22). Can St.Thomas extricate himself here from believing in a doctrine of original self-centredness?

9. Conception through sexual intercourse seems to "belong inescapably to human existence". Yet the story of the Virgin Birth denies this. Certainly the doctrine of the Logos "at centre" being the subject of all Jesus" human experiences makes him different in kind from us! Could he be called "totus in nostris"? The lengths to which some traditionalists are prepared to go in defence of the Virgin Birth are well illustrated by Fr. C. Wessels, O.P., in his book, The Mother of God: Her physical maternity: a Reappraisal (Aquinas Library, 1964). See the reference in Dr. E. Mascall's Theology and The Gospel of Christ (S.P.C.K., 1977), p.132. We are presented with nothing less than a speculative divine manipulation of Mary's chromosometic constitution.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Mature Christology

Introduction

Lampe's mature Christology developed from his disagreement with, and radical criticism of orthodox Christology as that was formed by the Fathers' interpretation of Scripture, and by their religious and philosophical presuppositions. It centred around the questions of the relations between the Persons in the Trinity, the interchangeability of terminology that allowed for difference or identity of divine functions. To read his criticism of the traditional solution as the latter was articulated by the Cappadocians and reinforced by Augustine and Aquinas, is to see his own solution taking concrete shape.[1] It is manifestly impossible to deal adequately in such a short space with the massive learning that he brought to his task. Much scriptural and patristic scholarship will have to be passed over, as virtually to leave but a bare skeleton of his total work. Chapter eight, in God as Spirit, "God as Spirit and the Holy Spirit", is the lecture on which we shall have to concentrate, for it brings the previous seven to a head. Within that chapter we shall, towards the end, concentrate chiefly on its closing pages. They contain both his final criticism of orthodox Christology, as well as his own conclusion.

One thing may be worthy of note at this early stage. It has been said that Lampe was often short on footnotes. In God as Spirit the substance of footnotes in incorporated in the main text, and the source references are meticulously noted. At a rough count,

and erring on the side of less rather than of more, we find nearly five hundred scriptural references, one hundred and fifty patristic references, about eighty of which are in chapter eight alone, and more than fifty to other writings. Thus nearly seven hundred references appear in a volume of two hundred and twenty eight pages. Perhaps this comment is not irrelevant?

The Christology of the formularies

There is one matter to which we must attend as to a kind of important preface to the mature Christology. It is Lampe's belief about the status of the traditional formularies that expressed the orthodox belief about Christ. We pick this out from his essay in Christian Believing on "The Origins of the Creeds".[2] It may be taken as the basic theological outlook underlying his Christology. The Christian has no neutral theological base from which to launch out. He stands within a theological tradition embodied in and mediated through the Bible, creeds, liturgy, preaching, ethos, and outlook of the particular religious group to which he belongs, and the confessional articles of a Church. Lampe admitted this was true of himself. The believer's exploration into truth consists largely in analysis, criticism, and evaluation of beliefs and attitudes derived from a long stream of tradition. Where they seem inadequate or misleading, he is committed to restate, modify, or replace them. He must delve into the past to try to appreciate the nature of the experience of those who initiated the attitudes of Christian faith, and to understand, interpret, and criticize the ways in which their faith and its implications were articulated. He must explore his present experience and try to see how it confirms and

corroborates the ancient faith, and the theology in which it was expressed, how far present experience renders the past obsolete, and requires the theological tradition, or even the basic faith which this expressed, to be modified or jettisoned.

As Lampe understood the matter, theological propositions and systems of belief are not revealed. Theology is not the locus of revelation. It is a process of reflection on faith that arises from revelatory experience. There is no infallibility available to us. The breakdown of the concept of revealed theology has been largely caused by the application of historical method to the study of doctrine, and the growth of the comparative study of religion. The great statements of orthodox belief, Nicaea and Chalcedon, are not timeless expressions of truth communicated from heaven, but human attempts to analyse and describe inferences drawn from man's experience of encounter with God. Divine self-disclosure takes the form, not of theological propositions, but of "acts of God" (such as the Exodus). Events in themselves, however, (even if uninterpreted events were accessible) would not be revelatory. It is events as interpreted in a particular way that mediate an encounter with God. An event which for one person may be an act of God need not necessarily be an act of God for someone else. It is the interpreted event which is the locus of revelation, and the interpretation which makes an event revelatory is derived from the outlook, presuppositions and habit of mind of the experiencing subject which he already entertains, and by traditional principles of conduct.[3]

Revelation is never presented 'neat' and undiluted, not even in a person. It is the person, as interpreted, who may be

revelatory for us: nor is it ever given except incarnated in human thought, imagination and emotion. "There is no possibility of attaching to any event or person a label reading 'guaranteed to be revelatory of God'. What may make us call an event an act of God, or cause us to find God disclosed in it, is our reaction to it, that is to say, the effect which it has on us" (p.105).

A primary criterion, he says, is whether an alleged revelatory experience is revelatory to me, whether it 'finds me', but a wise person will pay attention to the communis sensus which has established certain reference points, recognized some revelatory experiences as classical. This does not mean that one will always be bound by this general opinion but one will not ignore it. The criterion for distinguishing true claims to have experienced revelation from false can come to be "by their fruits ye shall know them". Here we see Lampe's characteristic stress on character. The element of insight or illumination (Tillich's "ultimate concern") may be articulated theologically by means of such concepts as the "Word" of God that speaks and is heard, and the "Spirit" of God that illuminates and inspires. The introduction of these theological terms may help to counteract the subjective aspect of this account of revelation (p.107).[4]

The response of faith is always a venture, and does not entail intellectual certainty. What it does involve is a readiness to test the validity of a faith response by making it a principle of action and living by it (p.107). To stand within the Christian tradition, therefore, does not mean a merely passive acceptance of past insights. Traditional interpretations of experience, and the derived faith are always subject to analysis, criticism, and

revision in the light of further experience. The content of theological concepts and formulations gradually comes to be understood in new ways, even while the language in which it was expressed remains unaltered and creates a deceptive impression that the theology itself is static. Sometimes the theological terms and formulations come almost imperceptibly to be emptied of their original content (p.109).

The fourth and fifth century creeds, like the sixteenth century confessions, tried to give contemporary answers to questions which were then contemporary. We do not ask the same questions today, and we cannot simply repeat their answers. The function of the creeds, said Lampe, is less to give us answers to repeat than to remind us of questions which we must keep on asking (p.114). With this statement of some of Lampe's fundamental beliefs, we proceed to the theme of his mature Christology.

The centrality of Christology

Lampe clearly accepts the traditional view that the identity of the Church is constituted by her belief in and about Jesus Christ. But the form which that belief should take can properly vary. In the past, the Church has believed herself to be possessed of a corpus of guaranteed truth. According to this view the propositional form expressing the doctrine of the Trinity, that God is one substance in three persons, expresses a truth inaccessible to natural reason and communicated directly by God.

As Lampe understood it, we have now come to realise that the status of this proposition is quite other. That God is of one substance in three persons is an hypothesis or model, a human theological construction and might in principle have outlived its

usefulness.[5] It is not a God-given doctrine, except in the sense in which we may hope all well-intentioned and sincere human thinking in every field of human inquiry is divinely inspired and guided. Like the hypothesis of incarnation it is not an irreformable truth communicated to men by God, and theological expressions of our faith are no more revealed than any other interpretation of our experience. Nicaea and Chalcedon are products of their time, expressions of what Christians believed about the revelation of God in Jesus in terms of fourth and fifth century philosophy. They are attempts, conditioned by the world of thought in which their authors lived, including its Greek theological presuppositions, to formulate insights derived from the Bible which had themselves been expressed in the forms of first century Jewish and Hellenistic thought.

In the Christian tradition Christ is the central reference point.[6] An example of changing interpretation might be found in the sense in which we understand the clause about the "coming again" of Christ and the Judgement. "He descended into hell" may be an instance of a proposition which has ceased to be meaningful. The centre of the continuing encounter between God and man, Lampe believes, is Jesus Christ. <u>There</u> is to be found the supreme revelation of the relationship between God and man. The Jesus of the gospels is God's word incarnated. Here is also the archetypal pattern of human response to God; it is a total possession by God's spirit, or in another image, an unbroken relation of sonship to God pursued to the point of death. As Professor Baelz has expressed it, we see in Christ the ground for trusting and hoping in God, the example of trusting in God, and the source of inspiration and power to trust and hope in God.[7]

Faith, e.g. in the exodus, where God is seen as saviour and redeemer, if corroborated and confirmed by subsequent experience, might find a sufficiently strong empirical basis despite the fact that what had been its original starting point had turned out to be myth and not history (p.112). The gospels are, after all, theological compositions in which the traditions are skilfully arranged in accordance with the interests and apologetic, liturgical, homiletic and other needs of Christians of a later generation. The traditions were embodiments of the reflections of the Church about Jesus in the light of its Easter faith and of a theology which it derived largely from the Old Testament read as an extended prophecy of Jesus' life and death, beliefs and reflections retrojected upon the actual figure of Jesus.[8]

The spirit or mind of Christ can supplement, and even in some respects persuade us to modify the teaching of Jesus presented to us by the New Testament tradition.[9] The belief has been held that Christ is not simply identical with the Jesus of history. In some sense Christ is still to be fulfilled or completed by his appearance in glory. We may, perhaps, envisage the fulfilment of this hope as the completion of the transformation of mankind by God's Spirit reproducing in human beings that sonship to God and that fruit of the Spirit which pre-eminently characterised Jesus, so that, in the end, they will truly reflect Christ. Christ will thus be glorified in Christ-like humanity, or the Spirit of God will be hypostasized in the saints. As a Christian believer Lampe conceived himself to be part of this continuing stream of faith and hope which responds to revelatory experience and he aligned himself with the general

intention and direction of the theological tradition built up in the past by those who had attempted to give a rational account of this faith and hope. Lampe did not think that believers today are necessarily committed to the forms in which this theological interpretation of our faith was expressed in the past.

Between 1968 and 1980 he wrote eight preliminary articles embodying his essential beliefs about Jesus. It will be helpful to extract the main points since they lead up to God as Spirit. In Christ for us Today his essay "The saving work of Christ", (SCM 1968) was one of the papers delivered at the fiftieth annual conference of Modern Churchmen in 1967. The central points are as follows: In Christ God has acted powerfully for man's salvation. Here is the decisive culmination of the mighty works of God in history (p.141). Thus our approach to an understanding of the saving work of Christ is always through christology. Soteriology and christology are interlocking attempts to answer the questions, Who is Jesus Christ? What does God do in and through Jesus Christ? In Christ the kingdom of God has drawn nearer; in him God has acted decisively. Christ is the living Lord, attested by belief in the Resurrection (p.142). Christians find in Jesus the supreme revelation both of man and of God, the ideal or archetype of man as God intends him to be, the new man, truly a son of God, who stands in an unbroken relationship of intimate unity with God by grace, love and trust which found its supreme expression in his new and unique mode of address to God, abba.[10] He moreover is the second Adam, yet his humanity is not discontinuous with that of all other men. In the language of Irenaeus he is the recapitulation of Adam, rather than the totally

new Adam, standing in full solidarity with his brethren, made like them in all respects.

In him sin was overcome (p.143). He was involved both in the inevitable, even if involuntary, participation of all men, by reason of their birth, in the collective sin of humanity and in the deep-rooted inclination to reject God. Jesus must be a sharer in original sin.[11] His humanity is by nature fallen humanity, otherwise there is no meaning in the record of his temptation (p.144). At the same time in Jesus there is unbroken communion of love and trust; sin is overcome by that love and trust.[12] In him there is the perfection of that relationship described as sola gratia sola fide (p.145). His was a life of total obedience, crowned in the supreme moment of death. Thus God sees us, as it were, in Christ, but this should not mean that his righteousness is imputed to us, for righteousness denotes primarily a relationship to God. Christ's saving work is his human life of sonship, with the cross as its climax, with the resurrection as its vindication, and the imparting of his righteousness to those who live by faith in him. That righteousness is an object of hope since it remains partial and incomplete in this life. Jesus is not merely the object but the mediator of divine grace (p.147). His later followers rightly see in him, not merely a prophet but the human embodiment of God's word and wisdom (p.148).

The question arises whether Christ's work simply reveals God's love or is also an act of God which effects something. Does it change the human situation? Is it an example, and have we only to respond? Here is the old controversy between so-called objective and subjective theories of the atonement. Lampe holds

that there is misunderstanding here, because revelation and act cannot be isolated from each other. Grace is objective though faith by which it is apprehended may be analysed as subjective. "Not I but the grace of God within me" (p.149). Lampe rejects theories of atonement such as the changing of God's attitude, satisfaction, vicarious punishment, retribution, as well as the idea that physical death is unnatural, and that eternal torment is ordained by God (p.150). Not satisfaction but re-creation is needed (p.151).[13] God's revelation is objective act, decisive and once for all. Thus the answer to our questions is in the Resurrection, the continuing experience of Christ as Lord, in the renewal and reproduction in ourselves and all men of the outreach of grace and the response of faith and obedience which were in Christ. There is no harm in the word subjective if we remember that we are speaking of one aspect of the atonement, the work of God (p.152). For most of us the mind of Christ is already communicated in large measure through Christian people. Most central and important is the truth embodied in St. Paul's phrase "In Christ", which is a social rather than an individual concept, the re-making of the world by reconciling it to God in Christ (p.153).

Spirit Christology

The relevance of this view of the atonement to the development of Lampe's mature Christology lies in the severe qualification of invasive views of the act of God in Christ. Lampe does not wish to deny the uniqueness of Christ, but he is striving to find terms in which to do justice to the raising of human personhood from within the substance of humanity. This is the significance of the Spirit Christology to which he turned.

"It is to express the concept of the immanent creative activity of the transcendent Creator", says Lampe, "that we use the term 'Spirit', referring to the one God, transcendent and immanent, as He makes Himself known in His outgoing towards us, which is also His indwelling within us".[14] Lampe uses the word Spirit to speak of God as active and related to personal beings, which, he says, is the only way in which we can speak of God. There was much dispute in the early Church as to whether the Holy Spirit is to be regarded as an anhypostatic operation of God (energeia) or as a substance or entity (ousia). Lampe does not refer to an impersonal influence distinct from God, nor does he indicate a divine entity or hypostasis which is a third person of the Godhead. He makes it clear that he speaks of God Himself, His personal presence, as active and related.

Lampe is very bold when he says that the central theme of his study of God as Spirit is "Descendit de caelo" (p.208). Of course he immediately denies that this means a reaffirmation of the traditional credal mythology, the descent of a pre-existent Jesus Christ, or the self-abasement of an eternal personal being, the Logos, God the Son, in assuming our mortal human nature. Rather, he asserts the continual descent of transcendent deity into immanence which is involved in the process of creation. Lampe thinks of deity itself becoming immanent in man in order that man may be moved to respond as a free son and so to achieve transcendence in union with God (p.208). Here, he declares, is a reassertion of the classical interpretation of the saving work of Christ: the "interchange of places" by which the Son of God became what we are in order that we might become what he is - sons of God in Him, the Son.[15]

This "exchange", however, Lampe sees as taking place in the entire process of the creation of man, not only at a particular moment in "salvation history". In creation there is a continuous Kenosis of God as Spirit, entering into a personal dialogue with His natural creatures, interacting with them at the level of their capacity for communion with Himself. This interaction means a continual descent of God into the human situation, and a continual ascent of man, liberated by divine love, so as to enter into the freedom of responsible sonship to God. The Christ event remains the focal point of this continuing descent and ascent. The ascent of man can be seen to consist in the attainment of Christ-likeness.

If we take the mythological picture of the descent of the pre-existent Son as an actual description of the "self-emptying" of a pre-existent being who was in the "form of God", it limits the divine Kenosis to a single event in history. The story almost seems to be telling us that God's representative paid a visit to the world and entered into our human state at a certain point in history. He descended, and then was exalted and enthroned as Lord, the abasement being an interval between his existence in the form of God and his ascension as Lord. Lampe held that this picture, even according to the traditional interpretation of it, is incomplete, for the Spirit remains immanent in the world, participating in its struggles and suffering, and interceding with God through the weak and ignorant prayers of men. The mythological picture, he tells us, must be seen differently, namely, as depicting the Creator - Spirit's descent to the level of His human creatures, His age-long incarnation of Himself in

human personality, and the continuance of His suffering at the hands of His human creation until the ultimate accomplishment of His creative purpose for them (p.210).[16]

Towards the close of his final chapter, Lampe summarized his damaging criticisms of the interpretation of the Spirit as a third person of the Trinity, in support of his own interpretation. It was the restriction of the term "Spirit" to "the Holy Spirit" that constituted the great difficulty in the way of his idea. He had previously shown how that situation had arisen. It was the result of the hypostatization of the concepts of wisdom and Logos, their appropriation to Christology, and the emergence of the model of Logos/God the Son, personified as the pre-existent heavenly Jesus Christ as the classical expression of the significance of Jesus. This development led to the tendency to think of the Holy Spirit as a third manifestation of the divine, associated especially with prophecy and with baptism and creation. Then, as the implications of Christian experience of inspiration, and the influence of proof texts came to require, as it seemed, a clarification of the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Logos, the Logos theology itself led on to the assertion of the full deity of the Holy Spirit as the third person, and the working out of the developed Trinitarian doctrine of the Cappadocians and Augustine.

Spirit, as the word was often used by the early Fathers, became an ontological rather than a functional term. It pointed to what God is in Himself, and in this sense it ceased to play its historic role as a "bridge term", linking transcendent deity with the experience of men. Lampe proceeded (pp.211-226) to show how the concept of Spirit was used in a confusing variety of ways.

It was so flexible. Contradictions, inconsistencies, uncertainties, the combination of ontological and functional conceptions, these kept cropping up amongst the early writers. Lampe illustrated this in fair detail (pp.211-226). The term sometimes almost signified the "stuff" of which God consists. Tertullian was influenced by the stoic belief that "spirit" is corporeal. Athenagoras spoke of God as "inaccessible Spirit, Word". Callistus was said by his opponent, Hippolytus, to have taught that the Logos and the Father are one indivisible Spirit, that is to say, one divine being: and Callistus also held that the Spirit in Christ (that is the deity of Christ) is the Father: "the Spirit was made flesh in the Virgin". Eusebius expressed the notion of the common deity shared by the three Persons by saying that the Father is Spirit, the Son is Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is Spirit. Gregory of Nyssa used similar language pointing out that both the words "Holy" and "Spirit" are applicable to the first and second Persons as well as the Third: for Scripture says that God is Spirit, and it also says in the obscure text, Lam.4. 20 (LXX) that "the Spirit before our face is Christ the Lord" (p.211).

In this sense of "deity" or "the being of God", "Spirit" was often used in Christology to refer to Christ's divinity (Callistus). Christ's flesh according to Barnabas, was the "vessel of the Spirit". Praxeas, according to Tertullian, made a curious distinction between Jesus and Christ, Christ being another way of referring to the incarnate deity: Praxeas' supporters "say that the Son is the flesh, that is, the man Jesus, while the Father is the Spirit, that is, God, Christ". Cyprian described the Incarnation in the words, "Holy Spirit puts on

flesh. God is mingled with man". This Christological sense of Spirit is often read out of Paul's words "born of the seed of David according to the flesh ... Son of God ... according to the Spirit". Tertullian said "Jesus was composed of flesh as man, and of Spirit as God". The same language was used by Adamantius (..."Christ, ... truly God according to the Spirit, and truly man according to the flesh"), and also by Apollinarius. Justin said "the Logos was the first born of God. He was the Spirit and power that are to come upon Mary". Theophilus of Antioch ... found that the Logos was described as "Spirit of God, Beginning, Wisdom, Power of the Highest". Tertullian maintained that in Luke 1.35 "Spirit of God was to be identified with the Word". He added: "When John says that the Word was made flesh, we understand also Spirit by the mention of the Word ... for Spirit is the substance of the Word, and the Word is the operation of the Spirit, and the two are one". Lampe noted that it was curious to find Tertullian choosing Spirit to denote divine substance, and Word to indicate activity. It is almost a reversal of the usual relation between these concepts. He reminds us that we have to remember that Tertullian was thinking of "Spirit" as the "stuff" of which deity consists, and was sermo and not Logos. Sermo more readily suggests an uttered word than the hypostatic, personal entity that Logos had usually come to denote. Hilary was another writer who used "Spirit" to mean Christ's deity, and so it was natural to interpret the "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" as blasphemy against the divine nature of Christ.

Lampe noted two remarkable passages in Hermas. In one of them, he was told that the "holy spirit" that talked with him in

one of his visions was the Son of God. Here, "holy spirit" means "divine being". In another of his visions Hermas was told that "the holy pre-existent Spirit which created the whole creation, God made to dwell in the flesh ... This flesh was made a partner with holy Spirit". In this passage "holy Spirit" did not mean the Son. Although it looked as though the passage was referring to the Incarnation, Lampe did not think so. Hermas was probably thinking of the indwelling of God's Spirit in the righteous in general. We mention the foregoing details only in order to show that in the early Patristic period the concept of Spirit could be used in a variety of ways, and was still very flexible. Later, progress of Trinitarian theology rendered this flexibility of terminology practically obsolete: "Spirit" and "Logos" came to be no longer interchangeable (p.214).

Since Lampe's opposition to traditional Trinitarianism springs partly from his immense knowledge of the Patristic period, it is only right that his deployment of arguments drawn from that sphere should be shown in some detail. The point was not merely to indicate the variety of early opinions but in particular to illustrate the usefulness of the concept of "Spirit" for expressing belief about God in Christ. Often enough the intention was to indicate the otherness and transcendence of God's being, over against the physical and changeable universe, rather than His immanent activity in the world. Origen, however, fruitfully combined these concepts. In his discussion of the text "God is Spirit" he speaks of God manifesting himself to men as dynamic and creative Spirit, uniting himself to them, yet remaining transcendent and separated from all that is material. Origen uses Spirit to express the idea of the divine deploying itself

in action in the world and mediating between the Father and man; for he can speak of the Logos-Christ as Spirit in his capacity as Saviour. When hypostatized, however, as a third entity, this mediating Spirit cannot, in his view, unite the believer with the essence of God, since in the last resort this third hypostasis is a created being (p.213).

Another instance of the combination of the ontological and functional conceptions of Spirit in the sense of deity may be seen in Tatian's use of the term to describe the creating and saving work of the Logos: the Logos "came forth as Spirit from Spirit" and created man in the divine likeness, to participate in God and possess immortality through the union of man's spirit with divine Spirit. Theophilus said that God made everything through His Logos and His wisdom. Irenaeus spoke of wisdom which is Spirit. Clement referred to Christ as "the Lord, Spirit, and Logos." This flexible use of the traditional term for God's activity towards His creation became increasingly rigid and restricted as the dominant Logos/Son theology developed, and it became difficult to assign a significant role to the Holy Spirit as a third hypostasis. Cyril of Jerusalem told his converts that the Spirit sanctifies and illuminates, dispels demons, and strengthens martyrs (p.214).

It became increasingly difficult to conceive of a role for the Holy Spirit in creation, for the concept of the Logos was sufficient for cosmology. Athanasius adopted the idea that the creative action of God derives from the Father and is accomplished through the Son in the Spirit, but he found it hard to explain clearly what "in the Spirit" meant. He suggested that the Spirit

is the "energy" or "active operation" (energeia) of the Son, and that the Spirit's role is to give actuality to the work of God that is carried out by the Logos: but what this "actuality" may mean is unexplained, except in so far as Athanasius tried to refer it to the Spirit's role as sanctifies: the Spirit, on this view, completes God's work by sanctifying it, sanctification being regarded as continuous with creation. Cyril of Jerusalem held similar view that the Spirit's function is to sanctify all that God created through the Christ-Logos. Basil of Caesarea sometimes used the term 'confirmation' in an attempt to assign a distinctive role to the Spirit in creation. God commands, the Logos creates, and the Spirit "confirms". He meant something like "perfects" - i.e. perfection in holiness. Didymus of Alexandria, also described the work of the Spirit as sanctification and claimed, like Athanasius, that sanctification is a form of creation.

All this is rather artificial, for no one could deny that everything that was ascribed to the Holy Spirit, so far as creation was concerned, could equally be predicated of the Logos. Some of the Fathers succeeded in making more use of the concept of Spirit in soteriology. There is Tatian's understanding of salvation as the union of man with Spirit, and the mediation by the Spirit of union with God, but this does not imply an alternative to the idea of salvation through the Logos, for Tatian uses "Spirit" almost as a synonym for Logos; it denotes the deity of the Logos. A more central place in soteriology is given to the Spirit by Clement, who emphasises the idea of the new creation. The Spirit creates the Pauline "fruits of the Spirit" (p.215).

In the area of soteriology it was no easier than in that of cosmology to differentiate between the action of the Spirit and

that of the Logos. This led to uncertainty about the actual meaning of the phrase "the Holy Spirit". Did it refer to a personal being? If so, was he divine in the fullest sense, or creaturely? Or did the phrase refer to an impersonal agency or activity, an influence of power sent from God? Lampe remarks that Scripture could be read in such a way as to suggest many incompatible answers. Clement of Rome and Hippolythus spoke of the Spirit in terms of grace. Paul of Samosata held an inspirational Christology, in the sense that he believed Jesus to have been a man indwelt by deity, but he used the term Logos and not Spirit to indicate this indwelling. Athanasius called the Spirit the Son's living energy, although he generally regarded the Spirit as a divine being. Others thought of the Holy Spirit anhypostatically as an energeia, while yet others believed the reference was to an angel (p.217).

The emergence of the ultimate general consensus that the Holy Spirit was both a subsistent being and also fully divine was slow and uncertain. The idea of God in action and in relationship did not easily fit with personification as a distinct divine entity along with the Father and the Son. Some recognised that direct scriptural evidence for the deity of the Holy Spirit as a distinct hypostasis was hard to find. It was believed that the truth about the Holy Spirit was not revealed until the doctrine concerning the Father and the Son had been established. The disclosure of his deity is thus post-scriptural (p.217).

There was hesitation on this issue for a long time. Origen argued that the words of John 3:8 ("the Spirit blows

where it wills") prove that the Spirit is not a mere energeia, but an "operative being", a spiritual subsistent entity. In spite of this, however, Origen decided that the Spirit is the highest of all those things which were brought into being by the Father through the Son: it is the Son who imparts to the Spirit his hypostatic existence. Eusebius of Caesarea though likeweise, and Eunomius held that since traditional teaching assigned the Spirit a third place in dignity and rank, he is "third" in nature, too; he is not unbegotten, for only the Father can be so described, and he is not an offspring like the Son, but a creature (p.218).

Speculation was discouraged by some, on the ground that it was impossible to explain the hypostasis of the Spirit precisely; Scripture gave no information. Athanasius, however, like the Cappadocian Fathers argued that the Spirit subsisted as a real being, and he found evidence for this in the words of the baptismal formula in Matt.28.19. So far as the deity of the Spirit is concerned, Athanasius appealed to the Christian experience of what the Spirit does: he acts as God. If he perfects and renews all things, then he must be Creator and not himself a creature. Gregory of Nazianzus, Athanasius, and Gregory of Nyssa all agreed. It was especially by the argument from identity in operation, or functional identity, of the three Persons, that the full deity of the Holy Spirit came to be acknowledged. The actual affirmation that the Spirit is consubstantial with the Father and the Son was slow in making its appearance, but in 362 AD Athanasius' council at Alexandria stated plainly that the Spirit was not a creature, nor external to the essence of the Father and the Son, but proper to it and inseparable from it (p.219).

The problem of inner-Trinitarian relations

After this lengthy and detailed sketch of the Patristic history of discussion about the Spirit, with very full references, Lampe went on to say that it was entirely right to affirm that when we speak of "the Spirit of God" or "the Holy Spirit" we are referring to God Himself, in no other sense of the word "God" than when we speak of "God the Father". "The term 'Spirit' does not denote an intermediary being or 'angel', nor does it refer to an impersonal force of influence. It does not mean a message or communication sent to us by God, nor a gift that we receive from him. We use "Spirit" language in order to speak of the experience of communion with the personal, active, presence of God himself" (p.219). What Lampe regrets is that this did not mean that "Spirit" language was a way of speaking about God in his activity and relationship towards ourselves, interchangeable with "word" language. Rather it meant that there is a being, an hypostasis, or a "person" (in the metaphysical sense), and that this person, "the Holy Spirit", is God in the same full and unqualified sense in which the person of the Logos-Son-Christ is God.

The vital problem now appeared, viz. how to relate this third divine hypostasis to the second. Patristic theology was faced with the question of relations within the Godhead. The analogy of "generation" had been appropriated to explain the relation of the Son, the Logos, to the Father. The questions appeared - could it also be used to reconcile the hypostatic existence of the Holy Spirit with his consubstantiality with the Father? If not, what was the Holy Spirit's mode of being (p.220)?

This question, whether the Holy Spirit is begotten or unbegotten, or whether he, as well as the Logos, is Son of God was widely and intensely discussed. Theologians, in order to avoid the alternatives of declaring the Holy Spirit to be a creature, or of asserting that he is "begotten" (which would imply two first "persons"), or of affirming that he is begotten (implying the existence of two second persons), fell back on the concept of "procession". "The Spirit of truth proceeds from the Father". (John 15.26). Here was a verbal, though, Lampe added, no more than a verbal solution to the puzzle (p.220).

In the early development of Trinitarian theology, Origen spoke of the Spirit "proceeding". He did not do this, however, to solve the metaphysical problem, for he applied the same word to the Son, as also did Marcellus of Ancyra, and Cyril of Alexandria. Eusebius used the term, not to refer to the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Father, within the being of the triune God, but of the "mission" of the Spirit from the Father to the world, which was the meaning intended by the Fourth Evangelist when he first used this word "proceed". Athanasius used it in both these senses. The real difficulty arose when this Johannine expression was lifted out of its proper frame of reference and used as a technical term for the purpose of solving a problem which was insoluble. "In the last resort", commented Lampe, "it was not a real problem ... We must thus affirm that the Spirit exists as God in a mode that is in some sense intermediate between unbegottenness and begottenness. That was the result of the deliberations of Augustine and the Cappadocians" (p.221).

Gregory asked, "What is procession?", and followed it with the question "Who are we to give an account of the ineffable

nature that is beyond reason?" His only actual attempt to offer some sort of explanation was not satisfactory. He tried to show how consubstantial beings can have different modes of subsistence. As Lampe pointed out, however, Gregory, despite his use of the analogy of three human beings who share a common Platonic universal humanity, goes on to state that each of the three divine persons is as entirely one with those with whom he is connected as he is with himself, because of the absolute identity of essence. When faced with the question what is the difference between generation and procession, Didymus simply took refuge in the fact of mystery. "Procession really is different from generation, but it is impossible to define what the distinction is. It is a mystery even to the angels" (p.222).

An alternative account of the relation of the Spirit to the Father was discovered in the proof text Psalm 33.6 ("By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth"). The wording suggested to Basil, and countless theologians after him, that the "breath of God's mouth" implied that the Spirit was "breathed" by God; his mode of existence could therefore be termed "spiration". "But", asked Lampe, "who can tell what is the difference between spiration and generation?" (p.222).

Athanasius had been convinced that the personal subsistence of the Holy Spirit was guaranteed by the "baptismal formula" of Matt.28.19, but there were difficulties. There were texts which ascribed creation to Logos-Wisdom, e.g. John 1.3, Proverbs 3.19 ("By wisdom the Lord founded the earth"), and Psalm 104.24 ("By wisdom hast thou made them all"). There were other texts, such

as Psalm 104.30 ("Thou sendest forth thy spirit and they are created") which attributed it to the Spirit. Athanasius concluded that these proved either that the Spirit is the Logos or that God had made all things in, or by, two Persons, but the progress of Trinitarian theology had rendered the ancient flexibility of terminology practically obsolete. "Spirit" and "Logos" were no longer interchangeable. There were other texts, too, as well as a weight of tradition, which led Athanasius and other supporters of the developed doctrine of the Holy Spirit, to regard the distinction of the Persons as something "given". The whole matter came to be looked on as an unsearchable mystery. Athanasius asked "Who shall dare to rename what God has named?", that is, the distinct hypostases which are named "Son" and "Spirit" (p.223).

Lampe pointed out that the roots of this presupposition about the personal subsistence of the Holy Spirit go back, together with the even stronger conviction of the eternal hypostatic existence of the Son, through the Christologies of the New Testament to the quasi-personification of "Wisdom" and "Logos" in pre-Christian thought. It was essentially the developed personification of Logos-Wisdom in terms of the pre-existent Christ-Son which determined the course which the theology of "Spirit" had to follow. He added that the force of Platonist theology was far too strong in the age of the creeds and councils to allow monistic theologies of the Sabellian or "dynamic-monarchian" types to resist (p.224).

The expression "proceed" is subjected by Lampe to radical criticism. Athanasius and Didymus were guilty here of using

words without properly understanding how Scripture intended them to be understood. John speaks of the Son, as well as the Spirit, "proceeding"; the Spirit "proceeds from the Father"; Jesus says, "I came forth from the Father". This does not mean that the Son "proceeds", in contrast to "being begotten"; John is speaking of the "mission" of the Son and the "mission" of the Spirit - their "coming" into the world from God. Lampe commented "this exegetical confusion did great damage, and it is unfortunate that it has persisted in spite of the critical study of the Gospels. It is still very generally asserted in ecumenical conversations about the Filioque, especially by Orthodox participants, that the doctrine of the "procession" of the Holy Spirit, in the Trinitarian sense, is contained in Scripture (John 15.26), which is simply not true" (p.224).

The distinction between ingenerateness, generation or filiation, and procession or spiration, as the differentia between the divine Persons, comes in for extremely damaging criticism, even if only from the semantic point of view. No one could say exactly what the distinction meant. The Cappadocians accepted the logic of their argument for the deity of the Spirit, which they had based on the identity of operation.

If the proof of his deity is that he acts in every way as God, that all he does in sanctifying and illuminating is also done by the Father and the Son, the way is opened to the admission of a total identity of operation. Each Person operates the operation of the Trinity. Gregory of Nazianzus admitted that the properties of each Person, severally, are ingeneracy, generation, and procession, and he held that the differences in

terminology corresponded to real differences of relationship: the state of being unbegotten, that of being begotten, and that of proceeding. Lampe concluded that this meant that "since there was no difference between the Persons except in respect of relationship, the Son is not Father, but he is what the Father is; the Spirit is not Son (even though he is from the Father), but he is what the Son is. The three are one in deity: the one is three in personal distinctions, that is to say, in distinct relations" (p.225).

There was now no distinction in essence and nature between God the Father, God the Son (God in Jesus), and God the Spirit, and no distinction in function, since the operation of each is the operation of the whole. Each Person is identical both with each of the other Persons severally and with the whole triad. The distinctions which enable us still to speak of "Father", "Son", and "Holy Spirit" are purely relational. The Father is the one God subsisting in the mode of ingeneracy or of paternity; the Son is the same one God subsisting in the mode of filiation or generation; the Spirit is the same one God subsisting in the mode of procession or spiration.

The preceding statement of these relational distinctions is tautologous. To be told that the Son subsists in the mode of filiation offers no fresh information, and is empty of content, since we can form no idea of what filiation or procession might mean. With regard to the concept of substantial relations discussed by Aquinas, the identification of the Persons with the relations offers no satisfactory way out of the difficulty of stating in what respect the Persons are differentiated from each other. "If there are relations there must be entities that are

related; but in this case the only entities are the abstract notions themselves of paternity, filiation and procession" (p.226).

As regards Augustine's human analogies such as the mind, its knowledge of itself, and its love of itself, and his reflections arising out of this, on the self-knowledge of God, and his love of himself in knowing himself, these do not require us to postulate distinct hypostases corresponding to these activities. "All Augustine's attempts to give content to the relational distinctions are unsatisfactory, for the functions of the soul, such as memory, understanding, will, in which he sees the image of the Trinity, are not hypostatic entities but activities or energies" (p.227).

Aquinas attempted to infuse some content or reality into the abstract relational distinctions, but his answer amounted only to the assertion that each Person would communicate the same undifferentiated reality (divine being), but would do so in a relatively distinct manner determined by each Person's relational distinction from the others. Lampe refers to the Summa Third Part, 3,5 and 6,and 2,7 and 8; and ends by saying "the whole argument is perhaps a little too reminiscent of Father de Regnon's question whether the three Persons come to our souls as three princes each in his own state carriage, or all together in one royal coach" (p.227).

Undoubtedly Lampe would annoy many orthodox theologians by his reference to the "dry abstractions of Augustinian orthodoxy",[17] and to "the attempts to escape from them by means of a tritheistic interpretation". Simply to project the sonship, sacrificial love and obedience of Jesus on to the relation of the eternal Logos to the Father, or to see the archetype of the Spirit-inspired

unity of human persons in a "social" Trinity, this implies the existence of three divine centres of consciousness - in other words, three Gods. Near the end he uses the bold, radical words "I believe that the Trinitarian model is in the end less satisfactory for the articulation of our basic Christian experience than the unifying concept of God as Spirit" (p.228).

The penultimate paragraph of his Bamptons seems, perhaps, a little strange in view of the devastating criticism to which he subjected the central doctrines of the Church, the doctrines of the Incarnation, Resurrection and Trinity. He wrote: "Some will complain that in sketching this alternative theological concept I have been more conservative than the present state of critical, historical, sociological and religious studies warrants, particularly in my emphasis on the centrality and decisiveness of the action of God in Jesus" (p.228).

His final words, however, were his real apologia. With them, not inappropriately, we may bring this part of our essay to a close.

> "The subjects which John Bampton prescribed were the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, the articles of the Christian Faith as comprehended in the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. I shall certainly not claim that the views I have expressed are compatible with the way in which the ancient creeds articulate our faith, but I do not think that even if formularies literally and ex animo, our understanding of them could really be identical with that of Christian people in 1780 when these lectures began, much less of the men of the fourth century and earlier who compiled them in the first place. I believe in the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the sense that the one God, the Creator and Saviour Spirit, revealed himself and acted decisively for us in Jesus. I believe in the divinity of the Holy Ghost in the sense that the same one God, the Creator and Saviour Spirit, is here and now not far from every one of us, for in him we live and move, in him we have our being, in us, if we consent to know and trust him, he will create the Christlike harvest: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness and self-control" (p.228).

Conclusion

The grasp and disentangling of the history of patristic arguments, with their gradual rejection of flexibility and of interchangeability in religious terminology; of the different interpretations of Scripture, of the inevitably misleading tie-up with pre-Christian philosophical and religious notions, of the transmutation of personal attributes into distinct hypostases, the functional into the ontological, all this I find, generally, not only difficult to resist, but also far from lacking in impressive and persuasive power.

It may be that here and there some things might have been better expressed a little differently, but this would seem still to leave the main argument standing firm, namely, that what the Church and traditional orthodox theology have referred to as one of three hypostases in the very being of God is, as already quoted, less satisfactory for the articulation of our basic Christian experience than the unifying concept of God as Spirit.

It is this battery of scriptural and patristic scholarship with its exposure of the defects of the doctrine of the Trinity that constitutes Lampe's defence of what we have chosen to call his mature Christology. Christ is the culmination of God's plan for his rational spiritual creation, the unique Spirit-filled man, the decisive God-related human being, human "at centre" in thought, desire, deed, conceived and constituted like the rest of us, not by any miracle of divine intervention, but naturally, preserving a total continuity with the entire creation. Filled with the same spirit that filled him, and bound together in the community of fellow-believers, we find ourselves, through such spiritual infection, saved from the self-centredness which is

sin, each of us a member of the Body of Christ, feeding upon his life and love in the Sacrament which he himself instituted and gave to us.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. See God as Spirit pp.221, 225. Also notice (p.224) Professor Lampe's words which would seem to be an answer to Professor Dunn's suggestion about Christian thought being "pushed in a Trinitarian direction." (Dunn's review in Theological Renewal, 12, June 1979). Lampe says: "It was essentially the developed personification of Logos-Wisdom in terms of the pre-existent Christ-Son which determined the course which the theology of "Spirit" had to follow. The force of Platonist theology was far too strong in the age of the Creeds and Councils to allow monistic theologies of the Sabellian ("dynamic-monarchian"), type to put up an effective fight". As regards the "procession" of the Spirit, Lampe categorically denies that John was referring to the Trinitarian use of "procession". John was speaking of the mission of the Spirit and the mission of the Son, their coming into the world from God. This exegetical confusion did great damage, and it is unfortunate, says Lampe, that it has persisted in spite of the critical study of the gospels. It is still very generally asserted in ecumenical conversations about the Filioque, especially by Orthodox participants, that the doctrine of the "procession" of the Holy Spirit, in the Trinitarian sense, is contained in Scripture (John 15.24) which is simply not true. (God as Spirit, p.224).

2. Christian Believing. Report of the Doctrine Commission of the Church of England, ed. M.F. Wiles (S.P.C.K., 1976), pp. 52-61 and 100-14.

3. See E.L. Mascall's criticism of Lampe's view of "acts of God" in Whatever happened to the Human Mind? (S.P.C.K.,1980) p.102.

4. See God as Spirit, p.105 and Christian Believing, p.107.

5. See God as Spirit, p.33, and Mascall's criticism, Whatever happened to the Human Mind? (p.107).

6. See "The Essence of Christianity", reprinted in G.W.H. Lampe, Explorations in Theology 8 (S.C.M., 1981), p.122, from The Expository Times, 87, 5 (1976), pp.132-7.

7. See God as Spirit, p.14. The source of the quotation is not located.

8. Dunn strongly rejects Lampe's view: see his review of God as Spirit in Theological Renewal., June 1979.

9. See God as Spirit, pp.109 and 113, for the modification of Jesus' teaching.

10. Lampe is surely correct in seeing here an indication of a difference in degree as regards intimacy with God. It cannot be strained so as to represent a difference in kind, which is what some would make it out to be.

11. A point of division between theologians, whether Jesus assumed fallen or unfallen human nature. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception safeguards the latter view.

12. There is a difficulty here. To speak of unbroken communion of love and trust, of the perfection of grace and faith, crowned in the moment of death, seems to ignore the shout of desolation, the sense of forsakenness; this in spite of "into thy hands".

13. This was one of C.F.D. Moule's central arguments against exemplarism; see The Holy Spirit (Mowbrays, 1978), ch.5, pp.52-69.

14. God as Spirit, p.207.

15. Compare Irenaeus de haer. 5 proem., and Athanasius, de Inc.54.

16. Lampe's use of the word incarnation to depict the work of the Spirit may be queried on account of the word's unavoidable association with the traditional doctrine of the incarnation of the Logos in human nature.

17. e.g. Nicholas Lash; see his review of God as Spirit in New Blackfriars, May 1978, p.239, where he refers to Lampe's lack of sympathy with metaphysics, and speaks of his "typically dismissive attitude" to Augustinian orthodoxy.

CHAPTER FIVE

Lampe and his Critics

Introduction

As was to be expected, God as Spirit unleashed a battery of criticism. The chief critics were Dr. Norman Anderson, The Revd. J. Coventry, S.J., Professor J.D.G. Dunn, Professor Nicholas Lash, Dr. E.L. Mascall, Professor D.E. Nineham. There were other critical writings dealing with the general theme of Incarnation and Inspiration. These had an obvious bearing upon Lampe's overall thesis, but no argument of note, in addition to those produced by the above mentioned authors, was produced. It may be recorded that all prefaced their remarks with generous tributes to Lampe's immense learning. The great tragedy was his relatively early death. Whatever the degree of justification that may be allowed to them, his critics would agree that the Church of England was the poorer by his loss. In what follows I have first aggregated the leading objections advanced by Lampe's critics, and followed this with a series of proposed answers, from Lampe's point of view. The chapter ends with a treatment of Professor C.F.D. Moule's contemporary work on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Lampe and his critics

Lampe, it was said, had not fully explored the possibilities of the model of incarnation as eruption, a breaking through from within.[1] To set aside total discontinuity was not to exclude some discontinuity. If Lampe says the incarnation of the Spirit in Jesus was continuous with God's eternal creative activity, it does not follow that it was not in some ways totally new.

If the response of Jesus was full, total, constant, and perfect, it was asked, could this have come about without a total and unprecedented presence of God as Spirit in Jesus? The concept of presence or total presence is no clearer or easier to handle than what had been meant by incarnation in a unique sense; both conceptualizations could be taken to be saying the same thing. Neither conceptualization is dependent on hypostatizing the Spirit-Word-Wisdom who became present or incarnate as a separate divine being. That could be a mistake for which there is no warrant in the prologue of the fourth gospel.

Lampe's thesis produced, it was said, an over-intellectualized version of Christian belief. Had he not set aside the belief that the Spirit of the Lord had filled the whole earth? Thus it was not man who was saved or created anew, in Lampe's re-interpretation, only the spirit or soul of man. His anthropology was thus questionable from a scriptural point of view. His view of the soul alone being saved deserted something central to Christian belief. Scripture has no time for detachable souls or spirits and their supposedly inherent immortality.[2] For Paul and for the central Christian tradition the whole of human experience needs salvation, and the whole creation eagerly awaits liberation from the shackles of mortality.[3]

As regards the Eucharist, it was said to be evacuated of any but a symbolic meaning of a highly intellectualized kind, almost impossible of assimilation by the mass of the faithful.[4]

It was held that Lampe played down the resurrection.[5] This was attributed to the difference between the biblical scholar as such for whom the object of study was the historical Jesus, and

for whom resurrection views were part of his later interpretation, and the believing thinker or theologian.

The basic systematic question raised by the critics was the issue of development.[6] According to Coventry it can be shown that the community arose from belief in the resurrection - exaltation of Jesus, that that community developed a conviction of his lordship, and that the earliest believers progressed from the conviction of Jesus' exaltation by God to the conviction that he shared and disposed of the powers of God (lordship). From there they progressed to the conviction that he sent his Spirit to give them a share in God's life, the Spirit they were experiencing, and finally, to the realisation that he must share God's life with God if he was to share it with us. The problem with the shape of Lampe's argument was that there was no need in an understanding of God as Spirit for this development. The heart of the matter was that this development was not simply an intellectual or conceptual affair. Worshippers were convinced in their experience that they encountered the Spirit of the Lord, the risen Jesus as Spirit. Christians must be able to say the same if they are to share the same faith, the faith of the Apostles. God would never allow his Spirit to mislead the Church.

Regarding the claim that some had met and spoken with Jesus today, Lampe had commented[7] that they would find it hard to explain the difference between that experience and being encountered by God. The critic concerned can only assert that he has no doubt that he is in communion with Jesus himself, and that no one who believes in the unity of the Godhead makes any sharp distinction between God and Christ.[8] He further referred to Lampe's belief

as meaning that God was "only inspirationally present" in Jesus. In this connection there was the difference between Jesus, and Moses and Elijah. Here, the critic said, was a distinction in kind, not just in degree. Spirit Christology, moreover, is seen to lead to a denial of the deity of Jesus. Lampe's thesis is thus basically unitarian.

It was objected that it was false to the biblical revelation to deny that we have been redeemed by an objectively efficacious act.[9] That God sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins was an impossible doctrine unless there was an essential identity between the God who sent and the Son who came. The Saviour, as Athanasius insisted, must be no less than God. Lampe's thesis involved a truncated Christology and an exemplarist doctrine of Atonement.[10] Any doctrine of God redeeming people through other people must be rejected. Christ's death, on Lampe's theory, constituted no proof of God's love towards us, and his answer to the question, why should it be assumed that there could never be another incarnation, was unsatisfactory.

The idea of the "Christ-event" was described by Lampe as a developing and, to some extent, a changing cluster of events and interpretations. This, in the eyes of some, made it appear that his basic Christian commitment was to an event and not to a person, even if a person seemed to be submerged in that event.[11]

A more serious criticism was directed against Lampe's model, since while it seemed to help the religious imagination, it lacked weight in the matter of the critical intellect.[12] What was lacking was any sense of the logical puzzles involved in the attempt to speak of God and man as "personal" in the same breath.

There was much talk by him of God's outreach, interaction, and dialogue with his creation. Were such terms being used analogically, and, if so, what were the logical constraints imposed upon the manner of predication?

He was held to be guilty of imprecision in the use of terms such as "being" and "entity",[13] and this put a question mark against his view of delicacy and discrimination as being either necessary or profitable. He was further held to be guilty of failing to understand Aquinas's doctrine of substantial relationships.[14]

A fatal flaw in his model was held to be his wholly inadequate treatment of the question of Jesus' resurrection.[15] Belief in that event could not be shown to be a mere corollary to some other Christological belief. New Testament exegesis does not support the belief that Easter was nothing more than the rise of Easter faith in the disciples. From the first it was always something that had happened to Jesus. Exegesis presents us with the disciples' belief that Jesus was alive from the dead, that he was involved in the continuing encounter between God and man, and that there was an overlap in the believers' experience between Son and Spirit, which constituted the dynamic that pushed Christian thought in a Trinitarian direction. The disciples were forced to the conclusion that Jesus was risen, not simply, as Lampe suggested, that his death had liberated his Spirit to inspire them. Jesus was seen as the first-born from the dead. Without his resurrection there could be no hope, since his death would have meant the triumph of evil, and not its defeat.[16] Jesus was to be seen as the beginning of a new race of humanity, not merely as one whose earthly life

was a model of sonship. He was also to be seen as exalted as Lord, to whom every knee would bow, who would himself, nevertheless, bow the knee at last to God, that God might be all in all.

This must bring us to face what, in many ways, the critic sees as the most important defect in Lampe's thesis, namely, his failure to appreciate, or give weight to, the eschatological emphasis of earliest Christianity, the sense that with Christ something eschatologically new had happened, that with him had come into history the power of God's final victory and rule, that with his resurrection Christ had already broken through death into that fuller life expected at the end of history.[17] With Christ there had happened a setting right of a creation that had gone wrong, a lifting up to a higher level of wholeness. Without the resurrection of the incarnate one, there would be no hope for man.

Lampe would appear to have lacked sympathy with metaphysics. Not being a philosopher or a rigorous systematic thinker, he made no attempt to suggest ways of dealing with problems posed for traditional faith by thinkers like Hume or Kent, the rise of modern science, or Freudian psychology, or to articulate any programmatic attitude or strategy like Bultmann or Barth.[18] Much would have to be done before it could become clear whether a coherent theological position could be made to emerge from his writings.

It was asked how did he, as a sympathetic student of the modern critical study of the gospels, suppose that the unbrokenly positive character of Jesus' response to God could be established

historically?[19] How did he suppose that such a response was brought about? We can hardly suppose that God allowed his purpose of saving the world to wait upon the emergence of a human being who was prepared to co-operate completely; and why, if it was all the work of God as Spirit in Jesus, did it not happen to others?

In the field of God's providential guidance of events, what place could be given to it in Lampe's theory, and especially to the great saving acts in history? Lampe nowhere considered the relation of this divine causality either to the problem of evil or to the unbroken webs of secondary causality.[20] Would he have supported a "dual cause" approach, like Austin Farrer?

He had emphasised that there could be no timeless or infallible theological propositions in the light of which religious truth or falsehood could be unmistakeably distinguished, but it is not clear if his accounts of the Christian past, e.g. baptism, or the history of patristic doctrine as a whole are entirely consistent with this recognition. He assumed that the correct exegesis of the New Testament would enable us to deduce something which could be called "the scriptural teaching" on the subject, and would constitute a theologically true conception of baptism with reference to which all patristic teaching is to be judged, and any deviations from which are to be condemned. He seemed to employ an undisclosed criterion by which early Church or Reformation beliefs and practices could be written off as abuses. In his contribution to the History of Christian Doctrine he had contented himself on the whole with

an exposition of the reasons the patristic writers put forward for holding or repudiating beliefs, without much attempt to get behind them. Statements in the older writers of which he disapproved were treated in the main as the result of blindness or superficiality of theological understanding. There was no real attempt to understand the tradition better than it understood itself by setting the various expressions of it against the general cultural background of the time.[21]

It seems only fair that the above points of criticism should be put alongside these words: "We should not allow the force of his testimony to be blunted or obscured because the pressure of other activities, and also, perhaps, the particular bent of his mind to some extent, prevented him from doing more than make often thoughtful and suggestive but still inchoate proposals about the forms necessary change might take".

One writer questioned the interpretation which Lampe placed upon the whole movement of life and thought which came to expression in the biblical and patristic corpus. He charged Lampe with rejecting the historical belief of Christendom in respect of two dogmas, viz. he asserted that God is one person not three: the Spirit is not a distinct person: he is the unipersonal God in his activity towards the world, and Jesus was simply a man in whom God as Spirit was uniquely and incomparably active; that is to say, Lampe was not only a Unitarian, but also an Adoptionist.[22]

His merely exemplarist soteriology was totally inadequate. In order to be reconciled to God man needs something more than an example of someone whose life was perfect, and who, himself,

needed no reconciliation.[23]

Lampe's version of the connection between an event and its interpretation was strongly challenged. He had said that it was not the event in itself which evoked repentance, and, therefore, saving efficacy; it was the interpretation which might be put upon it. It was, in fact, a particular interpretation placed upon an event which made it into an act of God. There was thus no event, however apparently miraculous, which could in itself compel every observer of it to acknowledge it to be an act of God; nor was there any event, however apparently ordinary, which might not in certain circumstances be an act of God for someone. He was blamed accordingly, for using as synonymous phrases "make an event to be an act of God", and "acknowledge an event to be an act of God".[24] It was held that here there was at least a suggestion that God's universal presence as creator and sustainer hardly merited description as an act of God unless we had interpreted it as such.

When it came to the question of the unique position ascribed to Jesus, Lampe was accused of side-tracking the question, who or what is Jesus? and substituting for it the question, what has God done in him and for us?[25]

His borrowing the term "incarnate" to represent his own belief about God as Spirit being fully and constantly in Jesus was open to the objection that the term had been traditionally, and for too long and deeply, associated with the orthodox doctrine.[26]

In seeing the Spirit "reduced" by making him occupy "a third place" it showed how little Lampe felt himself committed to the New Testament witness as providing the canon of Christian

belief.[27] It had taken nineteen centuries to discern the whole mass of Christian thought, witness and devotion from its adumbration in the New Testament, and whatever else was true about the Spirit, if Lampe was correct, it had certainly not led the Church into all truth.[28]

His use of the word "model" as referring to the doctrine of the incarnation was said to be question-begging and misleading.[29] It was difficult, as one critic said, to have a personal relationship with a model! The initial use of the word was to be found in the sphere of science, and it was borrowed by I.T. Ramsey in his discussion of religious language, but the notion was to be criticized as being unhelpful when we are concerned with "the clear truth or falsehood of an assertion".

Closely connected with this particular criticism is that directed towards the reference to the doctrine of the Trinity. The Trinity, it is asserted, is not primarily a doctrine any more than the Incarnation is not primarily a doctrine. There is a doctrine about the Trinity as there are doctrines about many other facts of existence, but if Christianity is true, the Trinity is not a doctrine; the Trinity is God.[30] The doctrine of the Spirit, like the doctrine of the Trinity, has been neglected.

If we are to be inspired by Jesus we must at least know Jesus' character, actions, words, his teaching about the Kingdom of God. We can only know these from the records, and it was these which Lampe examined and criticized so as to leave us with uncertainty. It had been better, it is said, if Lampe had dispensed with the term "Kingdom" altogether, rather than

subject it to so radical a process of redefinition. It seemed difficult, to say the least, to find a convincing basis for his desupernaturalized Jesus in the New Testament.[31]

The central issue was opened up with clarity and precision by the question, "If Christians believe in the decisive nature of God's self-expression in Jesus Christ, was this simply because he was supremely and totally inspired, or was it because, in Jesus, God's utterance had become a man in a way distinguishable from even the highest degree of inspiration?"[32] The usually accredited test of a realistic doctrine of Christ is whether it yields a realistic doctrine of salvation. This prompts the question, can an inspired person, even with plenary inspiration, achieve what Christians experience in Christ when they find in him humanity recreated and the new age beginning to be present? If Christ is experienced as a Saviour, rescuing the will from self-centredness, and human society from its warped condition, can it be that he is no more than a supremely inspired person? If man's capacity to respond to the Spirit is diminished, man's will warped, something more than an appeal is needed, something as radical as a new creation. Remaking from within by God incarnate seems alone sufficient. Experience shows that a mere Spirit Christology, for all its reasonableness, proves inadequate.[33] The basic assumption in this criticism is that God working by his Spirit, cannot save a man. The birth narratives, as well as the affirmations of resurrection and pre-existence may be adduced as congruous with a belief in the deity of Jesus.

Some hypothetical answers

What answers can we give to this mass of criticism? The first thing we would say is that eruption, i.e. a breaking through by God from within the evolutionary continuum, is radically different from incarnation. There is an undisputable difference between a miraculous supernatural divine intervention, and the slow working of God within the creative process. Irruption from above, cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be identified with eruption from below. The two conceptualities cannot be made to mean the same thing.

If the identity be pressed, we must ask, why two operations? or why one rather than the other? We could apply Occam's razor and cut out the unnecessary miracle of the hypostatic union. J.V. Taylor affirms the notion of eruption from within the evolutionary process;[34] Lampe deals approvingly with the idea as well; "The Spirit transforms man into that which he was not: yet this transformation is continuous with creation: it is the completion of creation. As the same time it is itself an on-going process by which God is perfecting his human creation, a process of which no end is actually conceivable, though it can be a symbol of eschatological hope".[35]

The charge of an over-intellectualized version of Christian belief can hardly be levelled by those who on the one hand, resort to metaphysics, and, on the other, play down the part played by the critical intellect in Lampe's thesis. As for his setting aside the belief that the Spirit of the Lord has filled the whole earth, surely that is a plain implication throughout the whole of God as Spirit.[36]

Lampe cannot be said to have evacuated the Eucharist of

any but a symbolic meaning of a highly intellectualized kind. That he uses the words symbol, symbolic, more than once, may be freely admitted, but taken together with other references, the unqualified charge is seen to be a gross exaggeration, unless it be brought against the teaching of the Prayer Book itself.[37] He speaks quite plainly of the eucharistic presence of Christ being mediated or effected by the Holy Spirit, of the body and blood of Christ being received in a heavenly and spiritual manner. He says that it can be affirmed that the body and blood are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

Though these are mainly references to the history of the doctrine of the Eucharist, there is running through them Lampe's own conviction that there is a real union between Christ and the believer.

> The Eucharist, then, is a sacrament of the life "in Christ", which is life in Christ's Spirit, life motivated and inspired by God the Spirit who was in Jesus. It is a sign and means of that process by which God the indwelling Spirit remoulds the believer according to the pattern of Christ, the sacrament of the Spirit's re-presentation of Christ in the lives of individual Christian people and so in the community which they constitute. It signifies the presence in the world of a 'body of Christ'. The Eucharist is thus the sacrament of a continuing re-enactment of Christ's sacrifice by God the Holy Spirit in union with the human spirit.[38]

There is a criticism of Lampe in regard to the question, how could the unbroken character of Jesus' response to God be established? It is asserted that we cannot suppose God allowed his purpose of saving the world to wait upon the emergence of a co-operative man. This, however, is precisely

what God must always do. He works by persuasion, never by coercion. If our freedom is God's own gift to us, God must respect it, and we know we can misuse it by not co-operating with him.

Some Christians claim to have encountered Jesus. Lampe commented they would find it hard to distinguish between that and being encountered by God. His answer seems a sound one, especially when addressed to those who affirm that there is no difference or inequality as between the persons in the Trinity. How does one distinguish between the voices of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit? The question is far from being either naive or irreverent. The critic who voiced this particular claim about encountering Jesus added that no one who believes in the essential unity of the Godhead makes any sharp distinction between God and Christ.[39]

Not infrequently we find some of Lampe's critics using expressions such as "merely", "simply", "only", in relation to the inspiration of the Spirit, when compared with the presence of the logos in Christ. The use of such qualifications plainly beg the question which they purport to discuss. Nor is it clear how such critics can extricate themselves from a charge of playing down, reducing, the person of the Spirit.

Any doctrine of God redeeming people through other people must be rejected; so it is held by those who charge Lampe with a merely exemplarist doctrine of the Atonement. We would refer such critics to what Lampe says in his dialogue with D.M. MacKinnon.[40] Meanwhile, we reply that this is not true, that our rejection of such a criticism is amply supported by

reference to history. Self-centred men and women have been rescued from their self-centredness, by the love of God-centred women and men. We assume this is what is meant by redemption, salvation. That it is the Spirit of Christ working in people to redeem people is the whole meaning of the effects of Christ's sacrificial death. It is difficult to separate this process from the liberating of Christ's spirit into the world.

Regarding Lampe's model of the incarnation, there is the critical comment that while it may help the religious imagination it lacks weight in the matter of the critical intellect, that there is no sense of the logical puzzles involved in speaking of God and man in the same breath. It may be conceded that Lampe was not a metaphysician and that he may have evinced a certain impatience with the intricacies of Augustinian and Thomist Trinitarian doctrine, but this criticism opens up a most significant question regarding liturgy and worship. Generally speaking the ordinary Christian worships largely through the medium of the imagination, an imagination fuelled by scriptural narratives, credal formulations, hymns and prayers, to say nothing of painting and architecture. The critical intellect is subordinated to the religious imagination. Especially is this true at times like Christmas, Easter, Ascentiontide. To feed the imagination rightly is thus a primary obligation on the part of theologians concerned particularly with liturgy and worship. Can the Trinitarian claim any advantage over the Unitarian in this? How would he rebut the criticism that in the act of worship he allows his imagination to wander freely in a tritheistic direction? Can it be said that the critical intellect of the

Trinitarian serves the religious imagination well? It is this sort of questioning that, to some degree at any rate, dulls the sting of the criticism directed against Lampe.

As for insensitivity to logical puzzles involved in speaking of God and man in the same breath, it is difficult not to see as many such involved in the logical unpacking by Lampe of the main-line formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. Orthodox terms such as coming down, forsaking, sending, proceeding, being absent, going up, are as much open to criticism as are Lampe's expressions outreach, interaction, dialogue. He cannot be accused of a failure of sensitivity to this difficulty, at the same time as a failure to use the admittedly difficult orthodox phraseology.

His failure to understand Aquinas' doctrine of substantial relationships ("a tour de force of metaphysical sophistication")[41] reminds us of Mascall's contention that that doctrine and the doctrine of perichoresis are the two great safeguards against the heresy of tritheism. It is a pity that the failure to understand was not clarified for the reader, but perhaps the restricting space available for a review was responsible. Perichoresis (circumincessio), the doctrine of the mutual interpenetration of the persons in the Trinity, is rooted in the eternal love which is the very essence of the Godhead. It is extremely difficult to see how love, exercised even between three divine "persons" (however we may interpret that word), abolishes the threeness that threatens us with tritheism and and sustains the unity of the Godhead: nor does L. Hodgson's idea of the degree of intensity of unifying power do anything

to keep the threatened heresy at bay.[42] However intense the degree of love's unifying power, there will always remain three that are bound by their love for each other.

That Christ's death without resurrection would have meant the triumph of evil is by no means clear. History is not on the side of those who would believe this. In spite of it being played down by some, there is such a phenomenon as the letting loose of someone's spirit in the world, as Masefield expresses it through Longinus' answer to Procula's question. The killing of a good man cannot be pronounced, tout court, as the triumph of evil unless he be raised. As Lampe says, Christ's future after death is as much a mystery as the future of any of us after the death of the body, but His spirit remains and its activity increases.

That Jesus was the beginning of a new race of humanity brings to the fore once again the real meaning of His humanity. This is emphasised over against Lampe's concept of Jesus as one whose earthly life was merely (!) a model of sonship. Tradition would ascribe to Jesus a constitution different in kind from our own. The subject of His human experiences was not human; it was the Logos, the second person of the divine Trinity. As the new race of humanity, can we really ever hope to aspire to that ontological level? What would be the moral quality of any filial obedience arising out of such "newness"? Kenoticism struggles to resolve the difficulties arising out of the doctrine of two natures, involving two wills, a solution which is no solution, in spite of Professor Moule's reference to A. Farrer's brilliant explanation.[43] The abandonment of specifically divine

attributes leaves us with the question of how they can be re-assumed, while their suspension or retraction leaves us with the problem of how they can be retained without being exercised. "Not my will but Thine be done" conjures up the impossible picture of the Logos addressing the Father whose will could not possibly be different. The idea of the "set" of the human will (Moule) only confirms the view that authentic human obedience is the outcome of the Holy Spirit's aid. Jesus is to be seen as one to whom every knee shall bow, yet He himself will bow the knee to God, that God may be all in all.[44] At the same time, he, the second person in the divine Trinity, will be seated at the right hand of the Father. We have to reconcile these religious pictures with the phrase, "Jesus was the beginning of a new race of humanity". It is hardly surprising that many find it difficult to do so.

Closely linked with this is the imputation of failure on Lampe's part to appreciate, to give weight to, the eschatological emphasis of earliest Christianity, that with Christ something eschatologically new had happened, that with Him had come into history the power of God's final victory and rule, that with his resurrection Christ had broken through death into the fuller life expected at the end of history. With him there had happened a setting right of a creation gone wrong. Without the resurrection there can be no hope for humanity.[45] God's final victory has been described by his critic as a breaking through death and as a setting right of a creation gone wrong. It is difficult to disagree with Lampe, surely and with those who think like him, that the death of the creaturely body is not to be seen as something to be broken

through, that it was here long before man appeared on the earth, that it is natural, not "something gone wrong", that it is, in fact, a feature of God's original creative evolutionary process, of which those who framed the idea of death as a penalty for sin, something to be reversed, were entirely ignorant. So far as human hope is concerned, that must ultimately rest on our faith in the unfailing love of God. So long as there is any relationship with the divine love, that alone must remain the ground of all our hope.[46]

That the Spirit has not led the Church into all truth, if Lampe's view is correct, is not as easy to maintain as at first sight it might appear. If Lampe's view is correct it would mean that somewhere along the line the Church had made a mistake. There is no infallible guarantee that such could never happen. There is an indication of the point at which such a mistake could have happened, in Professor Dunn's review, when he says there was an overlap in the believer's experience, between Son and Spirit.[47] It constituted an uncomfortable dynamic, he says, which pushed Christian thought in a Trinitarian direction. That "pushing" of their thought could very well have been their own mistaken interpretation of their experience of the Spirit who had indwelt Christ's human nature to a unique degree.

If it be asked how Lampe could decide that Christ was totally and continuously filled with the Holy Spirit,[48] the same kind of question could be addressed to those who hold that his human nature was miraculously united to the divine Logos. How could they possibly know? And can we hold that New Testament

exegesis provides us with an unquestionable basis for such a conclusion? Since no difference could possibly be discernible between two such individuals, Occam's razor could properly be applied, and the incarnation solution be cut out.

To the accusation that Lampe side-tracked the question, who or what is Jesus, and substituted the question, what has God done in Jesus and for us, Lampe's answer is clear. Mascall's accusation is a strange one, since Lampe's whole book is the answer. Jesus was the totally Spirit-filled man, and by the God-ordained law of moral and spiritual consequences, he has made available for us the Spirit that filled him, bringing creation to its fulfilment, which means our redemption from self-centredness, and our progressive movement towards God-centredness.

"It is a particular interpretation placed upon an event which makes it into 'an act of God'". So wrote Lampe, and he continued, "There is no event, however apparently miraculous, which can in itself compel every observer of it, whatever his presuppositions, to acknowledge it to be an act of God; nor is there any event, however apparently ordinary, which may not in certain circumstances be an act of God for someone". Mascall's criticism seems to have about it an air of quibbling and hair-splitting.[49] He calls Lampe's writing slipshod, on the ground that he could use as synonymous the phrases "make an event into an act of God" and "acknowledge an event to be an act of God". He suspected that here was a suggestion that God's universal presence as creator and sustainer hardly merits description as an act of God unless we have interpreted it as

such. That God is creator and sustainer is itself surely a belief, an interpretation. No proof is possible. It is an act of God for Mascall, simply because he believes and interprets it as such. It is for him God's act. He thus corroborates what Lampe was saying.

Amongst others, Professor Dunn has done much to show us the diversity of christological formulations which was a feature of the first century Christian writings. It is interesting that what he writes as a critic of Lampe yet contains echoes of Lampe's own thesis.[50] Perhaps, together with his complimentary introduction to his review of God as Spirit, this may go some way to mitigating the severity of his accusation in the same Journal that Lampe's view of the Christian faith entails deceit, discouragement and meaninglessness. Consider some of his concluding phrases: the eldest brother in the eschatological family of God; the prophet like Moses; inspired and anointed by the Spirit; known only in and through and as the life-giving Spirit, just as the Spirit is now, for Christians, known as the Spirit of Jesus; the one whose life embodied in the fullest possible measure the creative power and the redemptive concern of God; whose death defines in a final way the character of divine wisdom; the Word of God, the climax of Yahweh's utterance through prophet and Torah; the incarnation of God's self-expression.

In this kaleidescope of imagery, said Dunn, we see earliest Christianity searching around for the most suitable way of understanding and describing Christ, ransacking the available categories and concepts to find language that would do justice to the reality of Christ. He warns us against attempts to reduce the complexity of New Testament christology by focusing attention

on only one of the formulations, or by reducing the lot to some lowest common denominator. The rationale of the firm distinction maintained between inspiration by the Spirit, and incarnation of the Wisdom-Logos is not altogether easy to grasp, especially against the background of pre-Christian Jewish thought where Spirit, Wisdom and Logos were all more or less synonymous ways of speaking of God's outreach to man.

Dunn quotes Schillebeeckx as follows: "A thoroughly Scriptural orthodoxy does not entail conferring upon Jesus simultaneously all the images and titles available".[51] We glimpse a mixture of likeness and unlikeness, of agreement and disagreement, with Lampe, in his concluding words. As regards likeness and agreement we may notice the following: God has not abandoned his creation in all its self-centredness; he has identified himself with it in Christ; the creative power of God has its highest expression in the personal relationship of self-giving love which was the hall-mark of Jesus' ministry; the fullest expression of God's word is the Christ-event in all its historical relativity and consequent ambiguity; out of this poor human clay God has created afresh a man who is the crown of his creation; in Pentecost we celebrate the realization of faith that this Easter hope is not focused exclusively on one man in the past nor something we must simply await in total passivity, but a reality and process in which we can begin to share now;[52] in substance the Trinitarian confession means that God in Jesus Christ is permanently among us in the Holy Spirit.

Moule on Spirit Christology

One of the most interesting and illuminating discussions of the issue raised by the question, incarnation or inspiration, is to be found in Professor C.F.D. Moule's book The Holy Spirit.[53] He asks, is incarnation different from inspiration in degree or in kind? If Christians believe in the decisive nature of God's self-expression in Jesus Christ is it because in Jesus God's utterance had become a man in a way distinguishable from even the highest degree of inspiration?

Here is the issue of Lampe's thesis in a nutshell. It raises the central question, how could men distinguish between one who was held to be the Logos united to human nature, and one who was a man totally filled with the Holy Spirit? It is arguable that all their deeds and words would be identical, proceeding as they would from God himself.

Professor Moule is acknowledged as one of the most learned and careful among New Testament scholars. It is the more puzzling, therefore, to find in his chapter expressions which, to the present writer, appear as patently playing down the salvific efficacy of the Holy Spirit. (I shall underline the relevant words). Again and again we find phrases such as "Jesus, God incarnate, not simply a man inspired, not even if the inspiration were plenary". "In Christ, the complete being of the Godhead dwells bodily (2 Cor.9). The adverb 'embodied' appears to mean God himself, not merely some force or power distinguishable from God." "This inspiredness of Jesus is more than merely a supreme endowment with the Spirit". He expresses anxiety lest as tidy and coherent a view as a merely

inspirationist christology may not be an over-simplification in the light of early Christian experience. This experience cannot adequately be described as a man simply raised to the highest heights of inspiration".

The usually accredited test of a realistic doctrine of Christ, he says, is whether it yields a realistic doctrine of salvation.[54] He asks, can an inspired person, even with plenary inspiration,[55] achieve what Christians experience in Christ? "Christ" he says, "is authentically experienced as a saviour, rescuing the will from self-centredness, and human society from its warped condition. Can it be that he is no more than a supremely inspired person?" Main-stream Christianity has always found in Jesus Christ a saviour, not an example only. (He agrees that Jesus was an example of plenary inspiration). In effect, he asks what if something more is needed, something as radical as a new creation?[56] But this is really to ask, is something more than the Holy Spirit required? "Remaking from within" (surely the Spirit's job)" by God incarnate seems alone sufficient for our salvation.[57] Then there is the amazing sentence, "It would appear that experience shows that a mere Spirit Christology, for all its reasonableness, proves inadequate" (p.60).[58]

He concludes: "Inspiration doesn't serve adequately to describe what main-stream Christianity sees as the uniqueness of Christ". Yet he seems content to agree that the work of the Spirit is adequate for the formation of Christ-like character on which admission into the kingdom of heaven (salvation) depends. This, we recall, was one of Lampe's fundamental beliefs.

Professor Moule implies that in Christ God had become incarnate in a way distinguishable from even the highest degree of inspiration. We remain puzzled how the Christians could distinguish. What experience could lead them to regard belief in plenary inspiration as an over-simplification? Would experience of Christ as Saviour? Would rescue from individual self-centredness, or from society's warped condition? But these are precisely the tasks for which the Holy Spirit is qualified. Moule is really asking what if something more than the Holy Spirit is needed, e.g. something as radical as a new creation. But what could be more radical, more creative, than plenary inspiration? To what experience can we point to prove that Spirit christology is inadequate.

A significant remark of his is that the recipients of God's voice are fallible and human (echoes of Lampe!), bound always to be subject to error and uncertainty of interpretation May it not be that these reductionist references to the power and work of the Holy Spirit, and to distinguishing between Logos and Spirit, are erroneous interpretations?

Inspiration, he argues, does not serve adequately to describe what main-stream Christianity sees as the uniqueness of Christ. What it does serve to describe is the divine equipping of a person for a special task. It can be argued that this was precisely the case with Jesus. Moule says that each need is met by the Spirit's endowment to match it. "Behind the particular ministries and special needs lies the general equipping with Christian character which is the foundation on which the special gifts may be erected". But character and

gifts are one and the same and are the work of Spirit-inspiration. Entry into the kingdom was determined by Spirit-inspired Christ-likeness, and that was one of Lampe's fundamental beliefs. The Spirit cannot lag behind the Logos in salvific power and we cannot distinguish between the voice and work of the one and of the other.

Conclusion

Such at least are some of the replies which one can envisage from someone holding Lampe's general view-point. They are based, as we have shown in the major section of the thesis, on a view of tradition which permits the posing of radical questions. Lampe could find no grounds for a distinction between dogma and theology. If theology was provisional and uncertain, then dogma, the solemn affirmation of certain doctrines, was likewise provisional. The criteria he brought to the examination of traditional solutions were those of common-sense and economy, informed by Christian experience. When Lampe explains that he sees no content to a distinction between the modes of existence of second and third persons of the Trinity, he speaks with the baffled tones of a good-natured enquirer looking for conceptual clarity and finding none. When his Christian experience assures him of no sensible or perceptible difference in the sense of the presence of Christ or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the pathway to a radical revision of the doctrine of the Trinity is plainly open. It is in this context that Lampe's long meditation on the theology of Luke-Acts began to bear fruit in a series of proposals for a more economic (in a non-technical sense of that term) style of Christology.

Historically speaking proposals of Lampe's kind have re-occurred in the history of Protestant theology with great regularity for nearly 250 years. Lampe, who was a patristic scholar with no very profound knowledge of modern theology, was not in a position to relate his proposals to contemporary

theological fashion. As systematic thought they exist in a distinctively Anglican, or at least English world of thought, somewhat isolated from continental trends. What ensures their importance as more than a mere curiosity is the backing of his immense patristic learning. If the methodological freedom which he claimed is conceded, mere fashion will not evaporate the significance of his questions. At the very least there is a case to answer; and it may be that the main lines of his solutions will be found to have a perennial appeal.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FIVE

1. See John Coventry's review of God as Spirit in The Tablet Jan. 1978. p.54.

2. But see the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk.16,19.ff). See also Jesus' words to the dying thief, and the story of Christ preaching to the spirits in prison. Note also the words "may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace".

3. But is there any single or coherent traditionalist picture of a redeemed universe?

4. Coventry, p.54.

5. Ibid

6. Coventry, p.55.

7. See God as Spirit, p.2 f.

8. Norman Anderson, The Mystery of the Incarnation, p.116.

9. Anderson, p.125.

10. Anderson, p.127.

11. E.L. Mascall, Whatever Happened to the Human Mind? p.109.

12. Nicholas Lash, New Blackfriars, May 1978, p.238.

13. Ibid, p.239

14. Ibid, p.239.

15. J.D.G. Dunn, Theological Renewal, June 1979, p.33.

16. Ibid, p.34.

17. Ibid, p.33.

18. Lash, Ibid, p.239.

19. D.E. Nineham, Epworth Review, Jan.1982. p.15.

20. Ibid, p.14.

21. Ibid, p.16.

22. Mascall, pp.109-110.

23. Ibid, p.105.

24. Ibid, pp.102,103.

25. Ibid, p.104.

26. See God as Spirit, pp.46,76 and 83

27. Mascall, Whatever happened to the Human Mind? p.113.

28. Ibid, p.113.

29. Ibid, p.123.

30. Ibid, p.125.

31. Ibid, p.106.

32. C.F.D. Moule, The Holy Spirit (Mowbrays, 1978), p.59.

33. What experience?

34. J.V. Taylor, The Go-Between God (S.C.M. Press, 1972) Chs.4 & 5

35. God as Spirit, p.18. See also pp.11,12,21,23,144,179,180,205.

36. See God as Spirit, pp.179f.

37. See God as Spirit, pp.166f.

38. [So far the location of the quotation has eluded search. S.W.S.]

39. Anderson, p.116.

40. The Resurrection, p.99.

41. So Lash, New Blackfriars, 1978, p.239.

42. Compare L. Hodgson, The Doctrine of the Trinity (Nisbet, 1943), p.107.

43. In S.W. Sykes and J.P. Clayton, Christ, Faith and History (C.U.P., 1972), p.107.

44. Marcellus of Ancyra agreed.

45. That Lampe does not neglect those questions may be seen by even a cursory glance at his references in the Index to God as Spirit, pp.233-4, see esp.pp.158,160, and 174.

46. The Resurrection, p.60.

47. Dunn, Theological Renewal, June 1979, p.33.

48. Could Jesus really be called totally Spirit-inspired? He celebrated the Passover with its representation of God slaying innocent children. He is represented as able to change the Father's will by prayer. He shouted that God had forsaken him.

49. Mascall, Whatever happened to the Human Mind?, p.103.

50. See Christology in the Making (S.C.M. Press, 1980), pp.265-8.

51. E. Schillebeeckx, Jesus, An Experiment in Christology (Collins, 1979), p.53.

52. Do we see here eschatology assuming the form of pneumatology?

53. (Mowbrays, 1978). See chapter V, pp.52-69.

54. See The Holy Spirit, p.58.

55. "Even with plenary inspiration" can only mean "as god-like" or "as divine" as any man could possibly be, in fact sinless.

56. That would mean humanity recreated, a new age beginning to be present.

57. Remaking from within is precisely the Spirit's job.

58. P.60. But can the Spirit be limited in effectiveness?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, J.N.D., The Mystery of the Incarnation, Hodder and Stoughton, 1978.

Aquinas, T., The Summa Theologica, QQ.1-XXVI, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1913

Armstrong, C.B., Creeds and Credibility, Mowbray, 1969

Athanasius De Incarnatione Verbi Dei. E.T. by a Religious of G.S.M.V. S.Th. With an Introduction by C.S. Lewis. Geoffrey Bles, 1944

Baillie, D.M., God was in Christ, Faber and Faber, 1948

Barrett, C.K., From First Adam to Last, A. and C. Black 1962
The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition, S.P.C.K., 1966

Barth, K., The Word of God and the Word of Man, Hodder and Stoughton, 1928

Bowker, J., The Sense of God, Clarendon, 1973

Brunner, E., Man in Revolt, Lutterworth, 1939
The Mediator, Lutterworth

Bultmann, R., Jesus and the Word (E.T.), Collins Fontana 1958

Clogg, F.B., An Introduction to the New Testament, Hodder and Stoughton, 1937

Coventry, J., "The Basic Truths", The Tablet, Jan. 1978

Creed, J.M., The Gospel according to St. Luke, Macmillan, 1930
The Divinity of Jesus Christ, C.U.P., 1938

Cross, F.L., (ed). The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church. O.U.P., 1957

Cunliffe-Jones, H.,(ed). A History of Christian Doctrine, T. and T. Clark, 1978

Cupitt, D.,	The Debate about Christ, S.C.M. Press,	1979
	Taking Leave of God, S.C.M. Press,	1980
	Christ and the Hiddenness of God, Lutterworth,	1971
	Explorations in Theology, 9, S.C.M. Press,	1979
Dillistone, F.W.,	Charles Raven, Hodder and Stoughton,	1975
Dodd, D.H.,	The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, Hodder and Stoughton	1932
	The Bible and the Greeks, Hodder and Stoughton	1953
	History and the Gospel, Nisbet,	1938
Driver, S.R.,	The Book of Genesis, Methuen,	1904
Dunn, J.D.G.,	Christology in the Making, S.C.M. Press,	1980
	Review of God as Spirit, Theological Renewal,12,	1979
	Jesus and the Spirit, Westminster Press, Philadelphia,	1975
	Baptism in the Holy Spirit, S.C.M. Press,	1970
Edwards, D.L.,	Review of G.W.H. Lampe: A Memoir by Friends, Church Times	1982
	Review of God as Spirit, Church Times,	1977
Evans, C.F.,	Resurrection and the New Testament, S.C.M. Press,	1970
	Theology and Christology, S.P.C.K.,	1961
Farrer, A.,	Lord, I believe, Church Literature Association	1955
	A Science of God? G. Bles,	1966
Fawcett, T.,	The Symbolic Language of Religion, S.C.M. Press,	1970
Forsyth, P.T.,	The Person and Place of Christ, Independent Press,	1909

Fuller, R.H.,	The Foundations of New Testament Christology, Lutterworth,	1965
	The New Testament in Current Study, S.C.M. Press.,	1963
Gore, C.,	The Incarnation of the Son of God, John Murray,	1891
	Dissertation on Subjects connected with the Incarnation, John Murray,	1895
	Belief in Christ, John Murray,	1922
	Reconstruction of Belief, John Murray,	1926
Goulding, M., (ed.).	Incarnation and Myth, S.C.M.,	1979
Green, E.M.B.,	The Meaning of Salvation, Hodder and Stoughton,	1965
Grillmeier, A.,	Christ in Christian Tradition, Vol.1., (E.T.) Mowbray,	1975
Hanson, A.T.,	Grace and Truth: A Study in the Doctrine of the Incarnation, S.P.C.K.,	1975
Harvey, A.E., (ed.).	God Incarnate: Story and Belief, S.P.C.K.,	1981
Hick, J., (ed.).	The Myth of God Incarnate, S.C.M. Press,	1977
Hodgson P. and King, R., (edd.)	Christian Theology, S.P.C.K.,	1983
Hodgson, L.,	The Doctrine of the Trinity, Nisbet,	1946
	Christian Faith and Prectice, Blackwell,	1950
	And was made Man, Longmans,	1928
	For Faith and Freedom, Blackwell,	1956-7
Hoskyns, E.,	The Fourth Gospel, (ed.F.N. Davey) Faber and Faber,	1950
Houlden, J.L.,	"The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Person of Christ", Explorations in Theology 3, (pp.25-39) S.C.M. Press,	1978

Hunter, A.M., The Epistle to the Romans, S.C.M. Press, 1955

Jenkins, D., Guide to the Debate about God, Lutterworth, 1966

Jeremias, J., The Prayers of Jesus (E.T.)., S.C.M. Press, 1967

Kelly, J.N.D., Early Christian Doctrines, A. and C. Black, 1958

Kidd, B.J., Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church, vols. i and ii, S.P.C.K., 1932

Knox, J., The Humanity and Divinity of Christ, C.U.P., 1967

Lampe, G.W.H., See bibliography in Explorations in Theology 8, (S.C.M. Press, 1981), compiled by Dr. George Newlands. The following ought to be added:

"Theological Issues in the Baptism-Confirmation Controversy", The Modern Churchman, 1, 1, 1957

"The Relation of Baptism and Confirmation", in K.B. Cully (ed.), Confirmation: History and Practice, 1962

"The Atonement" in A. Vidler (ed.), Soundings, C.U.P., 1962

"The Saving Work of Christ", in N. Pittenger (ed.), Christ for us Today, S.C.M. Press, 1968

"An Open Letter on Exorcism", (with Don Cupitt) in Explorations in Theology 6, Don Cupitt, S.C.M. Press, 1979

Doctrine in the Church of England, The 1938 Report with a New Introduction by G.W.H. Lampe, S.P.C.K., 1982

Lash, N., Review of God as Spirit in New Blackfriars, 1978

"Up and Down in Christology", New Studies in Theology i, (eds. S.W. Sykes and D. Holmes,) Duckworth 1980

Lindars, B., and Smalley, S.S., Christ and Spirit in the New Testament, C.U.P., 1973

Lowry, C.W., The Trinity and Christian Devotion, Eyre and Spottiswoods, 1946

Macgregor, G.H.C., "The Gospel of John", Hodder and Stoughton 1928

Mackinnon, D.M., "The Relation of the Doctrine of the Incarnation and the Trinity", in Creation, Christ and Culture, (R. McKinney, Ed.). Edinburgh 1976

Maclaren, E., The Nature of Belief, Sheldon Press, 1976

Macquarrie, J., Thinking about God, S.C.M. Press, 1975

The Humility of God, S.C.M. Press, 1978

Principles of Christian Theology, S.C.M. Press, 1977

Marxsen, W., The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, S.C.M. Press, 1968

Mascall, E.L., Christ the Christian and the Church, Longmans, 1946

Existence and Analogy, Longmans, 1949

The Importance of being Human, O.U.P., 1959

Theology and Images, Mowbray, 1963

The Christian Universe, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1966

Christian Theology and Natural Science, Longmans, 1956

Via Media, Longmans, 1956

Theology and the Gospel of Christ, S.P.C.K., 1977

Whatever Happened to the Human Mind? S.P.C.K., 1980

Matthews, W.R., The Purpose of God, Nisbet, 1935

God in Christian Thought and Experience, Nisbet, 1963

McNeile, A.H., Introduction to the Study of the New Testament, O.U.P., 1953

Moffatt, J., The First Five Centuries of the Church, Hodder and Stoughton, 1938

Moule, C.F.D., The Phenomenon of the New Testament, S.C.M. Press, 1967

The Origin of Christology, C.U.P., 1977

The Holy Spirit, Mowbray, 1978

"The Manhood of Jesus in the New Testament", (essay in Christ Faith and History, edd. S.W. Sykes and J.P. Clayton), C.U.P., 1972

Nineham, D.E., Explorations in Theology 7, S.C.M. Press, 1977

"Geoffrey Lampe as Theologian", Epworth Review, vol.9, No.1, Jan. 1982

Oppenheimer, H., Incarnation and Immanence, Hodder and Stoughton, 1973

Pannenberg, W., Jesus - God and Man, (E.T.), S.C.M. Press, 1968

The Apostles Creed (E.T.), S.C.M. Press, 1972

Pittenger, N., Goodness Distorted, Mowbrays, 1970

The Word Incarnate, Nisbet, 1959

(ed.) Christ for us today, (Papers from the Modern Churchmen's Conference 1967) S.C.M. Press, 1968

Christology Reconsidered, S.C.M. Press, 1970

Prestige, G.L., God in Patristic Thought, S.P.C.K., 1936

Fathers and Heretics, S.P.C.K., 1958

Quick, O.C., Doctrines of the Creed, Nisbet, 1938

The Doctrine of the New World, Nisbet, 1944

Ramsey, A.M.,	The Resurrection of Christ,	Geoffrey Bles,	1945
	God, Christ and the World,	S.C.M. Press,	1969
	Holy Spirit,	S.P.C.K.,	1977
	The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ,	Longmans,	1949
	From Gore to Temple,	Longmans,	1960
Ramsey, I.T.,	Words about God,	C.S.M. Press,	1971
	Religious Language,	Macmillan	1957
	Christian Discourse,	O.U.P.,	1965
	Models and Mystery	O.U.P.,	1964
Raven, C.E.,	Creator Spirit,	M. Hopkinson,	1927
	Jesus and the Gospel of Love,	Holt, New York,	1931
	Apollinarianism,	C.U.P.,	1923
	Evolution and the Christian Concept of God,	O.U.P.,	1936
Rawlinson, A.E.J., (ed.).	Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation,	Longmans,	1928
Relton, H.M.,	A Study in Christology,	S.P.C.K.,	1934
Richardson, A.,	A Theological Word Book of the Bible,	S.C.M. Press,	1950
	An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament,	S.C.M. Press,	1958
Richmond, J.,	Theology and Metaphysics,	S.C.M. Press,	1970
Robinson, J.A.T.,	The Body,	S.C.M. Press,	1952
	Twelve New Testament Studies,	S.C.M. Press,	1962
	Honest to God,	S.C.M. Press,	1963
	The New Reformation?	S.C.M. Press,	1967
	Exploration into God,	S.C.M. Press,	1967
	But that I can't believe,	Collins Fontana,	1967
	In the end God,	Collins Fontana,	1968
	The Difference in being a Christian Today,	Collins Fontana,	1972
	Can we trust the New Testament?	Mowbrays,	1977
	Truth is Two-Eyed,	S.C.M. Press,	1979

Schilling, H.,	The New Consciousness in Science and Religion,	S.C.M. Press,	1973
Sellers, R.V.,	Two Ancient Christologies,	S.P.C.K.,	1940
Selwyn, E.G., (ed.)	Essays Catholic and Critical,	S.P.C.K.,	1950
Smedes, L.B.,	All things made new,	Erdman, Grand Rapids,	1970
Solle, D.,	Christ the Representative,	S.C.M. Press,	1967
Stacey, D., (ed.)	Is Christianity Credible?	Epworth Press,	1981
Stead, G.C.,	Divine Substance,	Clarendon Press,	1977
	"The significance of the Homoousius", (E.T.) Studia Patristica III, ed.F.L. Cross, Akademie - Verlag,	Berlin,	1961
Sykes, S.W., Clayton, J.P., (eds.)	Christ Faith and History,	C.U.P.,	1972
Sykes, S.W., Holmes, D., (eds.)	Christian Technology Today,	Mowbrays,	1971
	New Studies in Theology,	I. Duckworth,	1980
Sykes, S.W.,	"Life after Death", (Essay in "Creation Christ, and Culture", ed. R.W.A.McKinney),	T. and T. Clark,	1976
	The Integrity of Anglicanism,	Mowbrays,	1978
	The Identity of Christianity,	S.P.C.K.,	1984
Taylor, H.V.,	The Go-Between God,	S.C.M. Press,	1972
Temple, W.,	Christus Veritas,	Longmans,	1925
	Mens Creatrix,	Longmans,	1924
	Nature Man and God,	Longmans,	1934
Theissen, G.,	On Having a Critical Faith (E.T).	S.C.M. Press,	1979
Thornton, L.S.,	The Incarnate Lord,	Longmans,	1928
Turner, H.E.W.,	Jesus the Christ,	Mowbrays,	1976
Vidler, A.,	Objections to Christian Belief,	Constable,	1963

Wand, J.N.C.,	A History of the Early Church to A.D. 500,	Methuen,	1957
	The Four Great Heresies,	Mowbray,	1955
	The Atonement,	S.P.C.K.,	1963
Weston, F.,	The One Christ,	Longmans,	1907
Whale, J.S.,	Christian Doctrine,	C.U.P.,	1941
Wiles, M.,) Santer, M.,)	Documents in Early Christian Thought,	C.U.P.,	1975
Wiles, M.,	Working Papers in Doctrine,	S.C.M. Press,	1976
	The Re-making of Christian Doctrine,	S.C.M. Press,	1974
	Faith and the Mystery of God,	S.C.M. Press,	1982
Young, F.,	From Nicaea to Chalcedon,	S.C.M. Press,	1983

JOURNALS, PERIODICALS, DICTIONARIES, consulted

Theology

The Modern Churchman

The Church Times

Epworth Review

New Studies in Theology

Journal of Theological Studies

London Quarterly Review

Scottish Journal of Theology

The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church

Expository Times

Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible

Encounter